10

Domestic Girlfriend

KEI SASUGA

DOME×GIRL

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10

DOME
GIRL

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D O M E
G I R L

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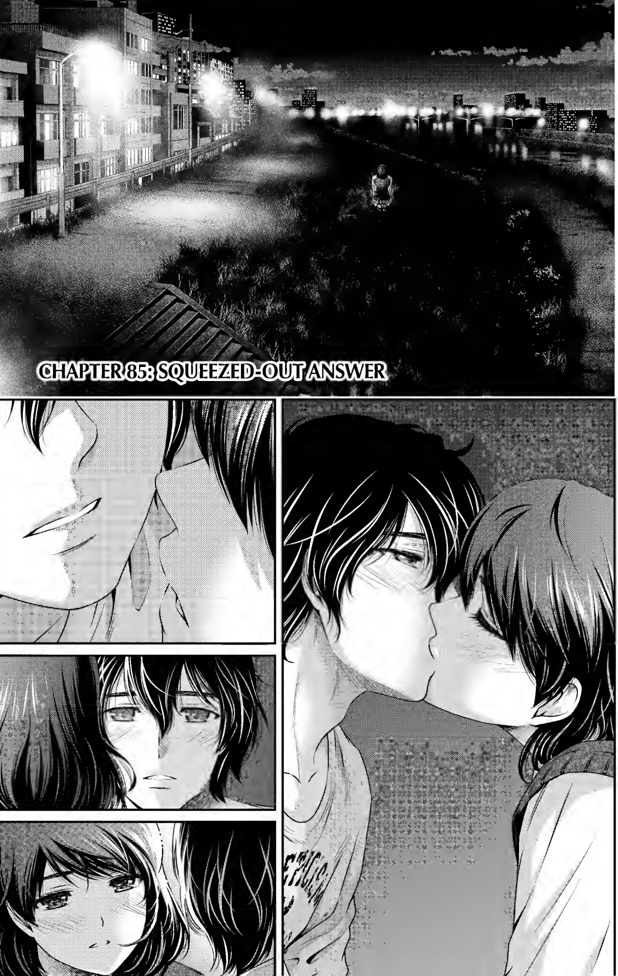
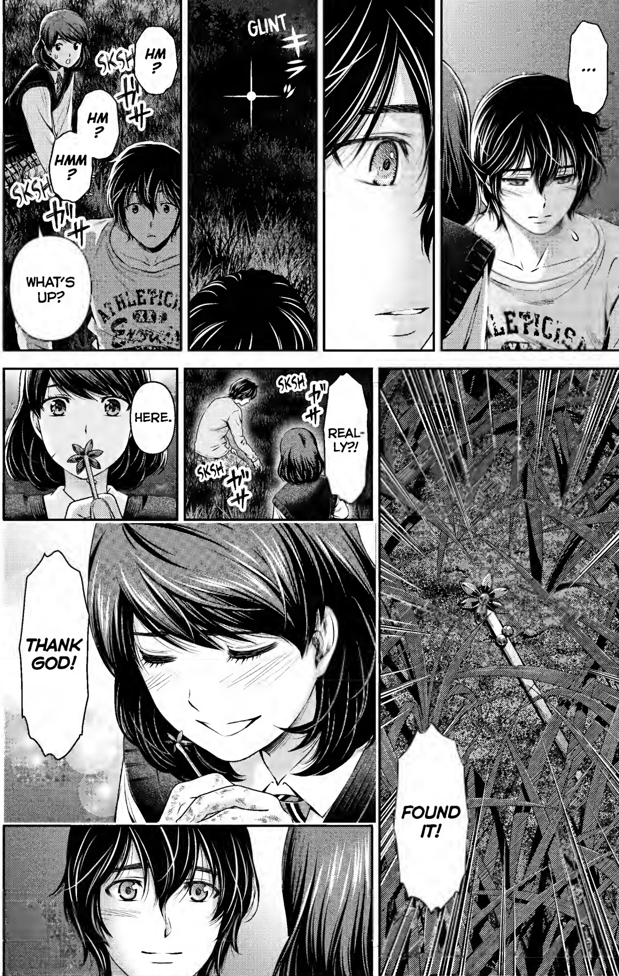
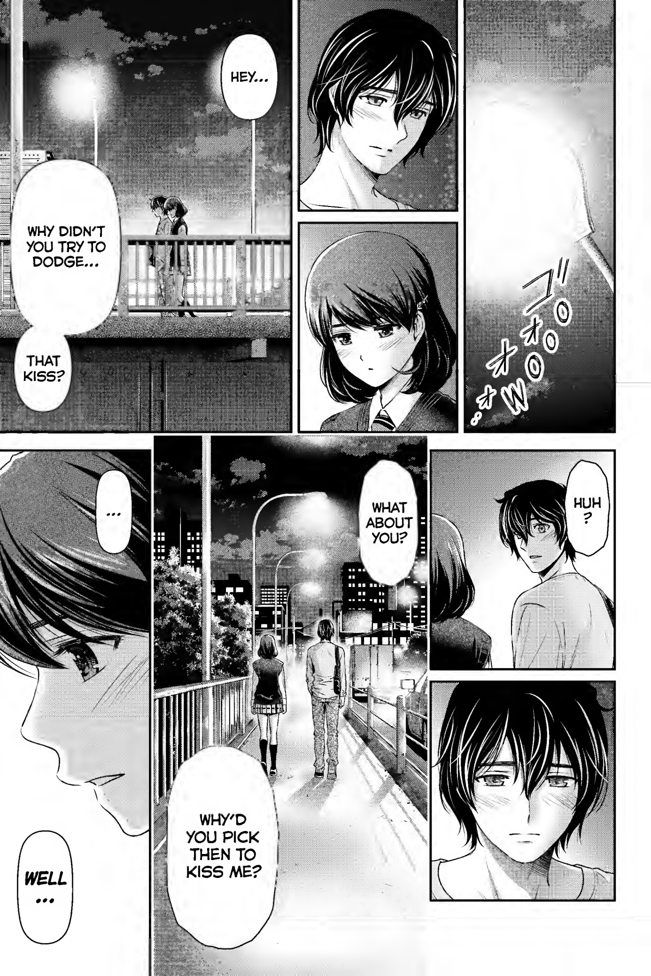
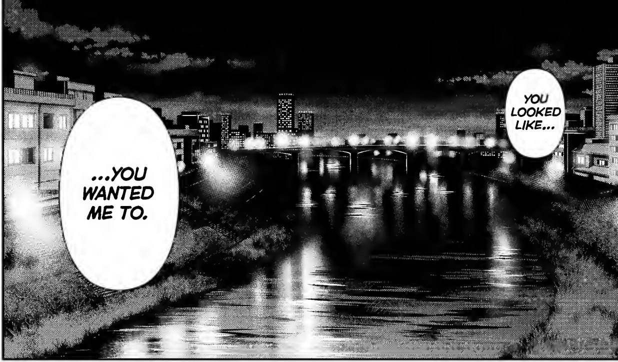
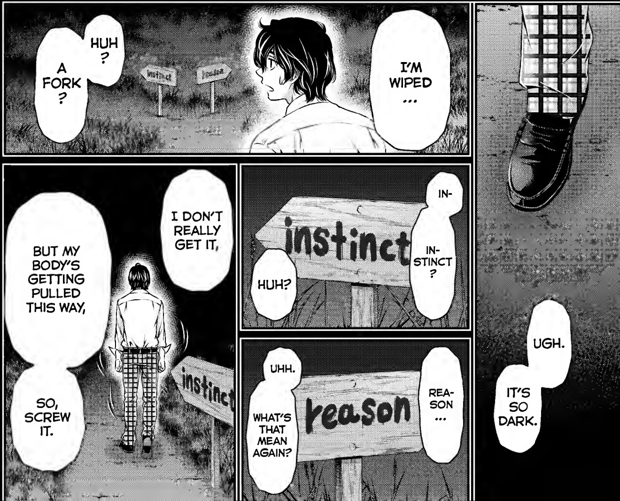
CHAPTER 85: SQUEEZED-OUT ANSWER

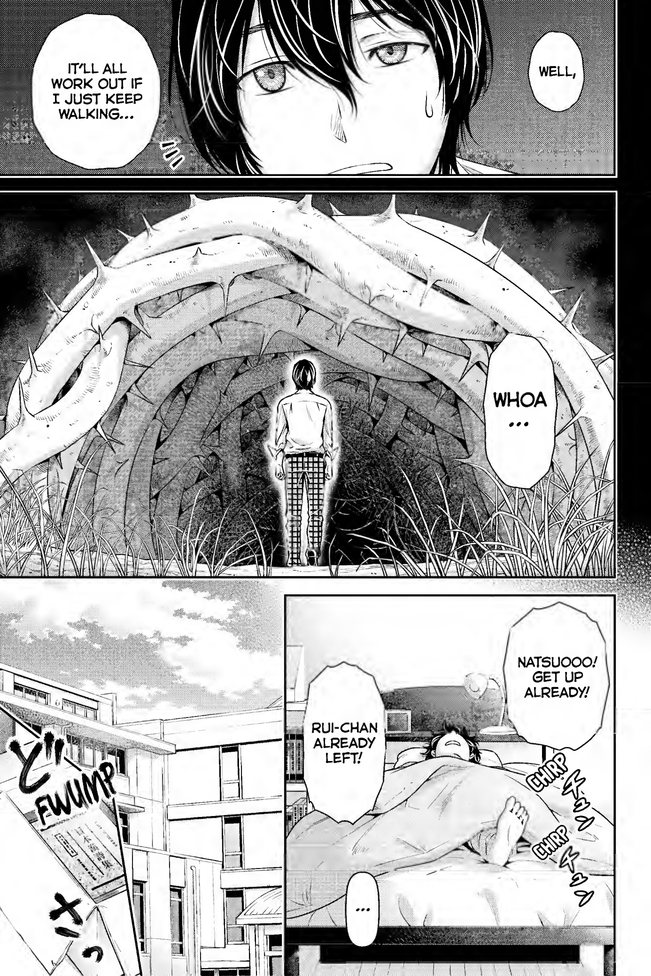


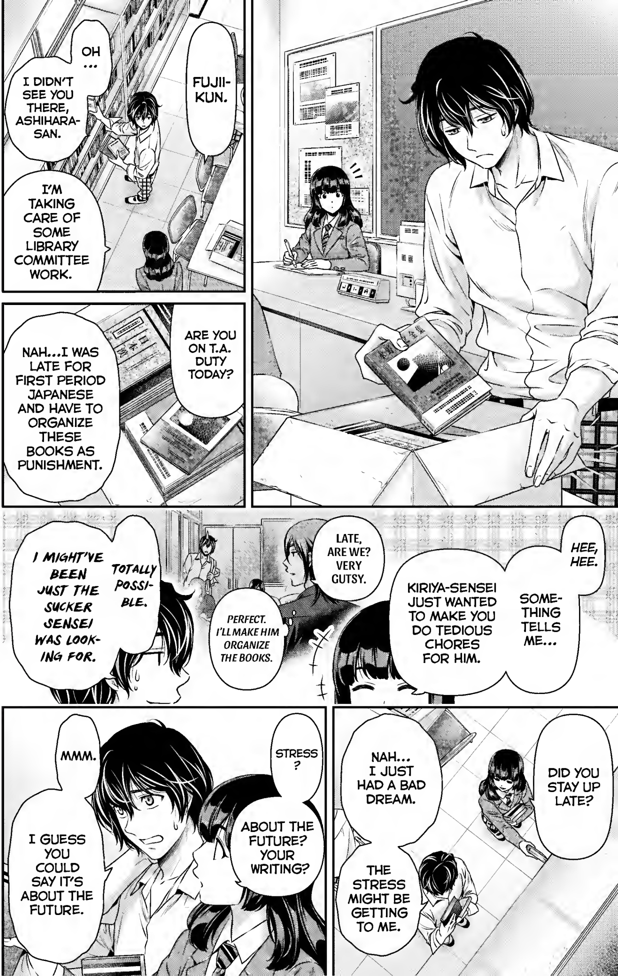

...
GLINT キラッ
HM?
SKSH ガサ
HM?
HMM?
SKSH ガサ
WHAT'S UP?
FOUND IT!
SKSH ガサ
REALLY?!
SKSH ガサ
HERE.
THANK GOD!

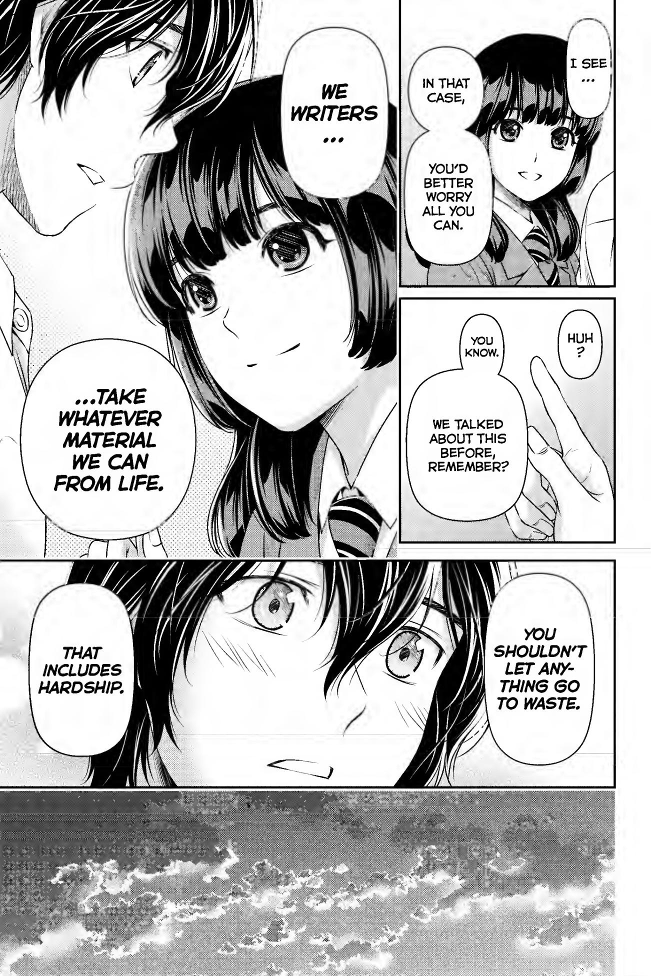

ゴォォォ
WOOO
HEY...
WHY DIDN'T YOU TRY TO DODGE...
THAT KISS?
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
HUH?
WHY'D YOU PICK THEN TO KISS ME?
...
WELL...

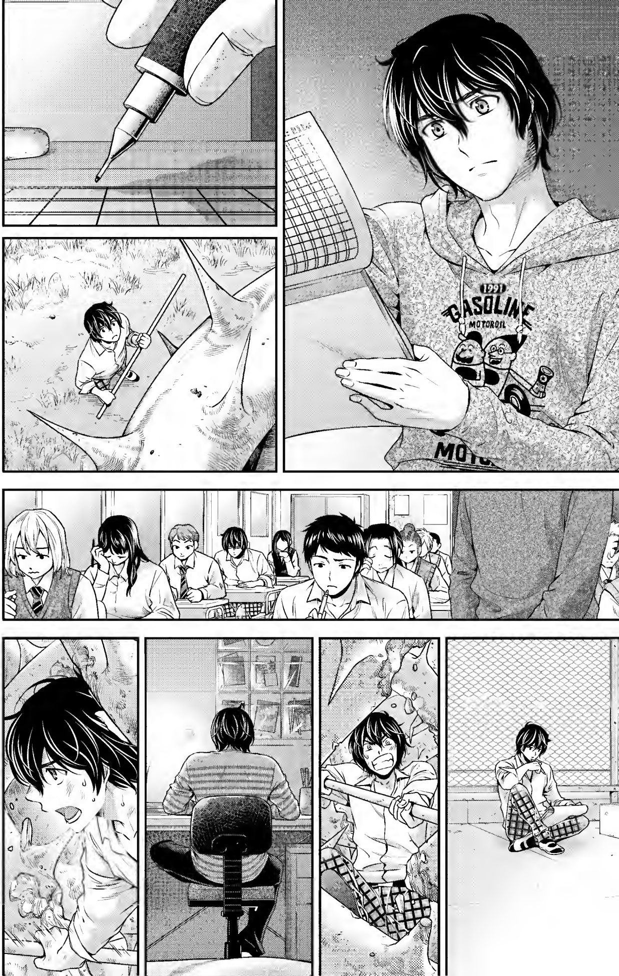

YOU LOOKED LIKE...
...YOU WANTED ME TO.

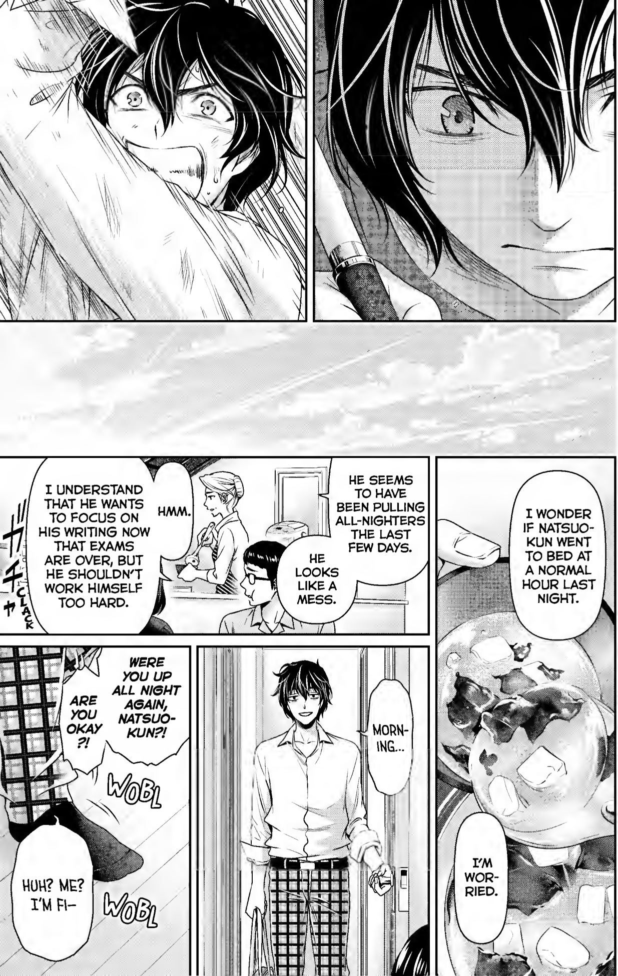

UGH.
IT'S SO DARK.
I'M WIPED...
HUH?
A FORK?
instinct
reason
IN-
IN-STINCT?
HUH?
instinct
REA-SON...
UHH.
WHAT'S THAT MEAN AGAIN?
reason
I DON'T REALLY GET IT,
BUT MY BODY'S GETTING PULLED THIS WAY,
SO, SCREW IT.
instinct

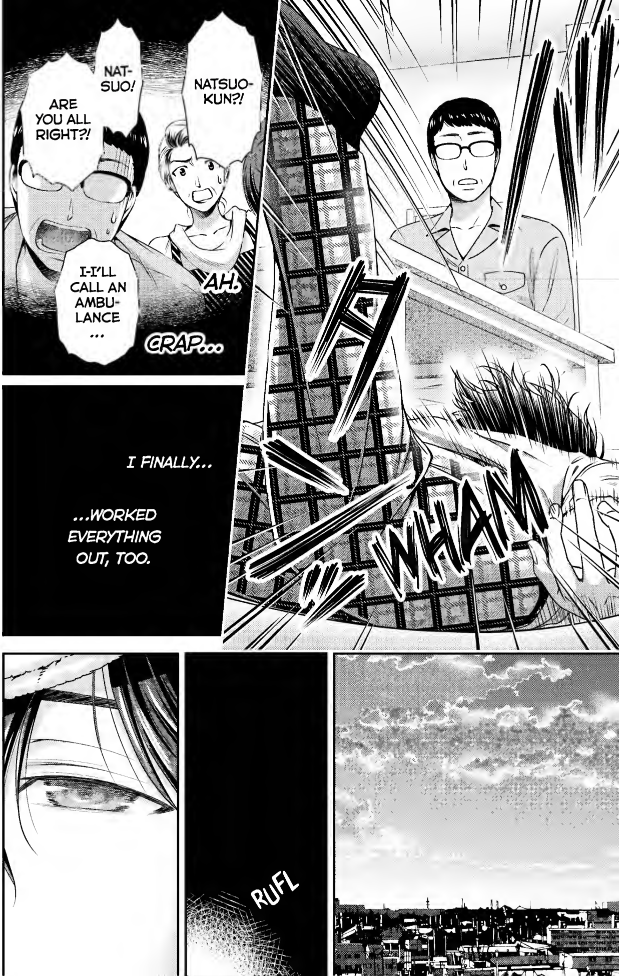

WELL,
IT'LL ALL WORK OUT IF I JUST KEEP WALKING...
WHOA ...
NATSUOOO! GET UP ALREADY!
RUI-CHAN ALREADY LEFT!
CHIRP
CHIRP
...
FWUMP

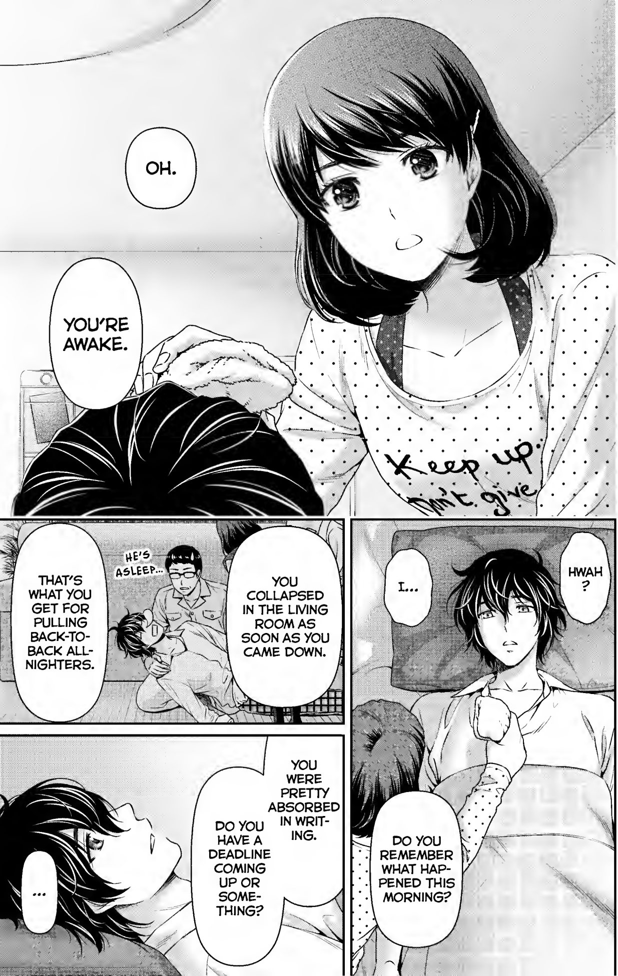

FUJII-KUN.
OH... I DIDN'T SEE YOU THERE, ASHIHARA-SAN.
I'M TAKING CARE OF SOME LIBRARY COMMITTEE WORK.
ARE YOU ON T.A. DUTY TODAY?
NAH...I WAS LATE FOR FIRST PERIOD JAPANESE AND HAVE TO ORGANIZE THESE BOOKS AS PUNISHMENT.
HEE, HEE.
SOMETHING TELLS ME...
KIRIYA-SENSEI JUST WANTED TO MAKE YOU DO TEDIOUS CHORES FOR HIM.
LATE, ARE WE? VERY GUTSY.
PERFECT. I'LL MAKE HIM ORGANIZE THE BOOKS.
TOTALLY POSSIBLE.
I MIGHT'VE BEEN JUST THE SUCKER SENSEI WAS LOOKING FOR.
DID YOU STAY UP LATE?
NAH... I JUST HAD A BAD DREAM.
THE STRESS MIGHT BE GETTING TO ME.
STRESS?
ABOUT THE FUTURE? YOUR WRITING?
MMM.
I GUESS YOU COULD SAY IT'S ABOUT THE FUTURE.

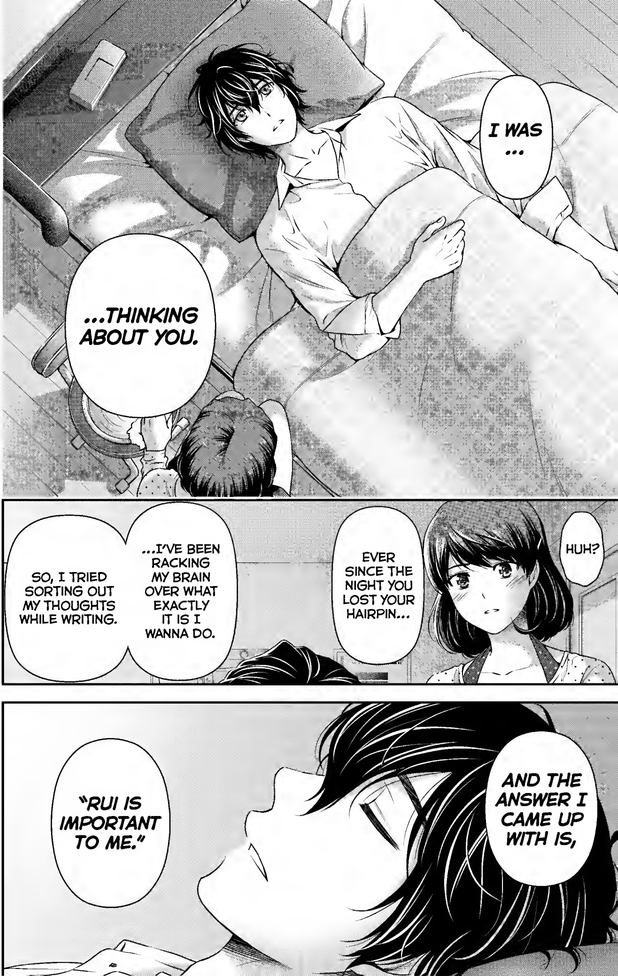

I SEE ...
IN THAT CASE, YOU'D BETTER WORRY ALL YOU CAN.
HUH?
YOU KNOW.
WE TALKED ABOUT THIS BEFORE, REMEMBER?
WE WRITERS ...
...TAKE WHATEVER MATERIAL WE CAN FROM LIFE.
YOU SHOULDN'T LET ANYTHING GO TO WASTE.
THAT INCLUDES HARDSHIP.

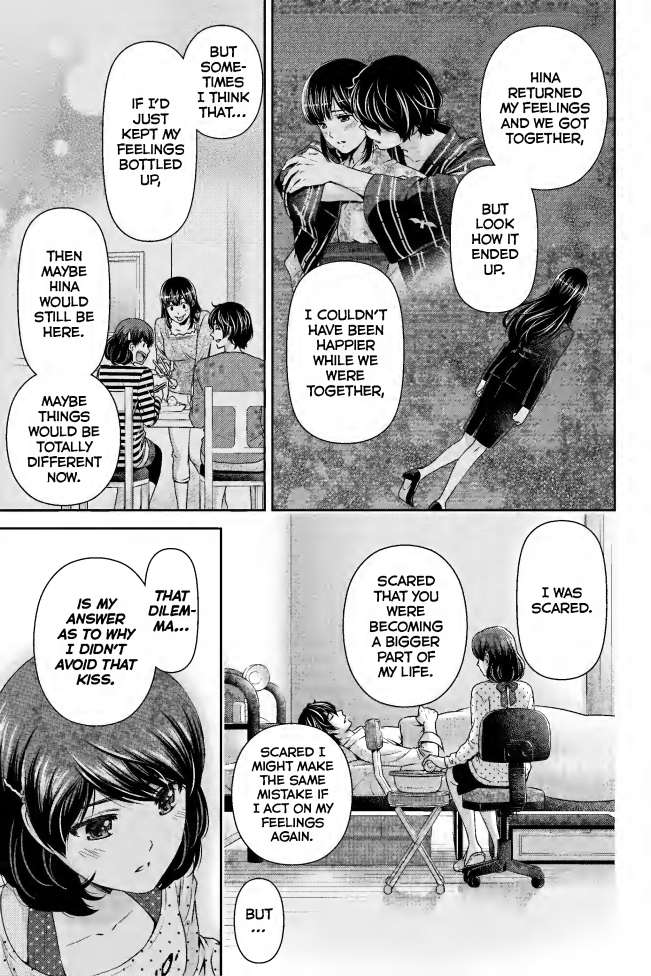

1991
GASOLINE
MOTOROIL
MOTO

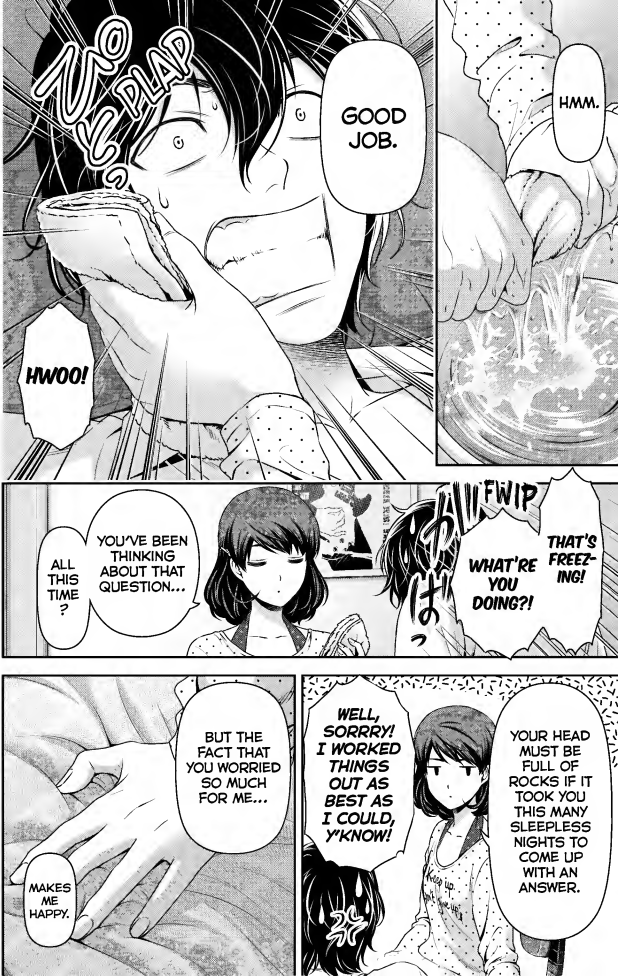

I WONDER IF NATSUO-KUN WENT TO BED AT A NORMAL HOUR LAST NIGHT.
I'M WORRIED.
HE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN PULLING ALL-NIGHTERS THE LAST FEW DAYS.
HE LOOKS LIKE A MESS.
HMM.
I UNDERSTAND THAT HE WANTS TO FOCUS ON HIS WRITING NOW THAT EXAMS ARE OVER, BUT HE SHOULDN'T WORK HIMSELF TOO HARD.
ガチャ
CLACK
MORNING...
WERE YOU UP ALL NIGHT AGAIN, NATSUO-KUN?!
ARE YOU OKAY?!
WOBL
HUH? ME? I'M FI-
WOBL

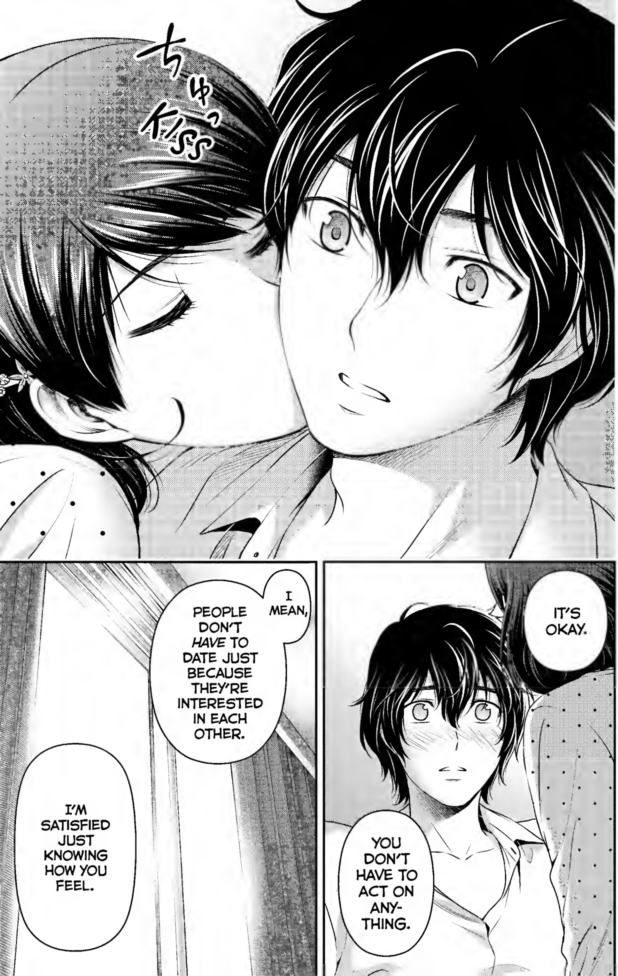

WHAM
NATSUO-KUN?!
NATSUO! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
AH.
I-I'LL CALL AN AMBULANCE...
CRAP...
I FINALLY...
...WORKED EVERYTHING OUT, TOO.
RUFL

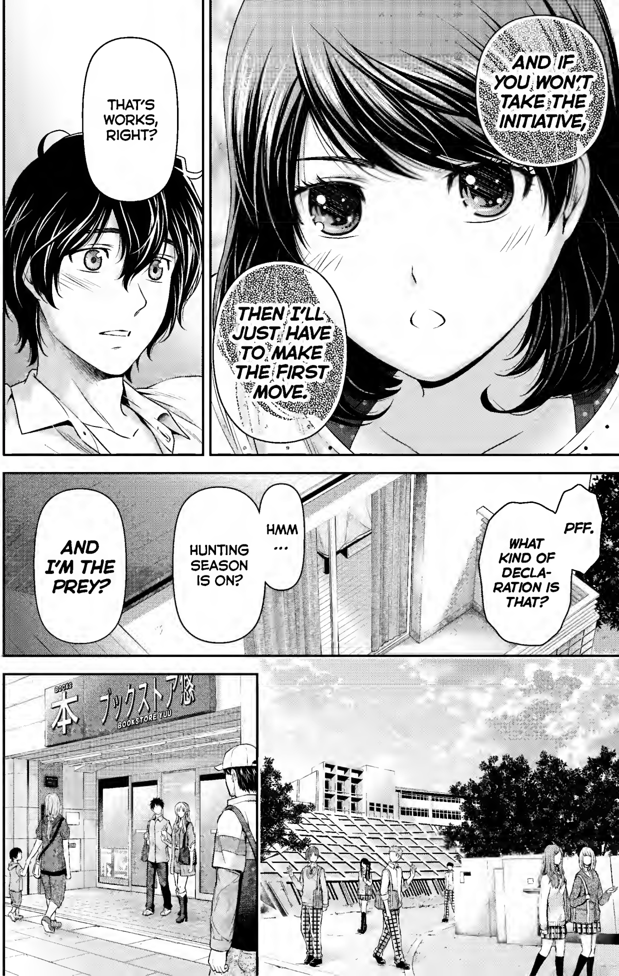

OH.
YOU'RE AWAKE.
Keep up. Don't give
HWAH ?
I...
YOU COLLAPSED IN THE LIVING ROOM AS SOON AS YOU CAME DOWN.
HE'S ASLEEP...
THAT'S WHAT YOU GET FOR PULLING BACK-TO-BACK ALL-NIGHTERS.
DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED THIS MORNING?
YOU WERE PRETTY ABSORBED IN WRITING.
DO YOU HAVE A DEADLINE COMING UP OR SOMETHING?
...

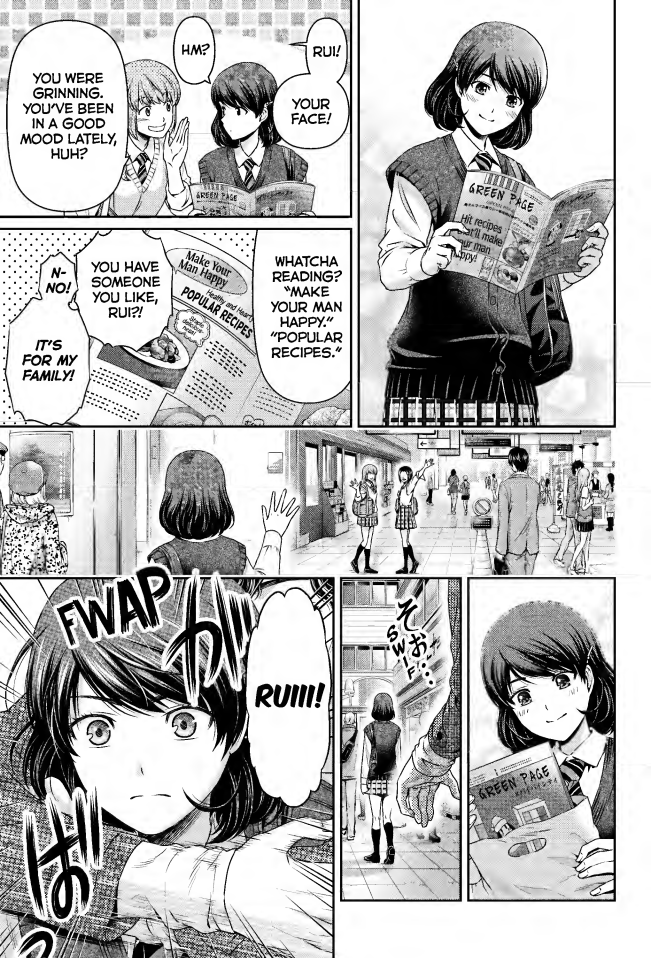

I WAS ...
...THINKING ABOUT YOU.
HUH?
EVER SINCE THE NIGHT YOU LOST YOUR HAIRPIN...
...I'VE BEEN RACKING MY BRAIN OVER WHAT EXACTLY IT IS I WANNA DO.
SO, I TRIED SORTING OUT MY THOUGHTS WHILE WRITING.
AND THE ANSWER I CAME UP WITH IS,
"RUI IS IMPORTANT TO ME."

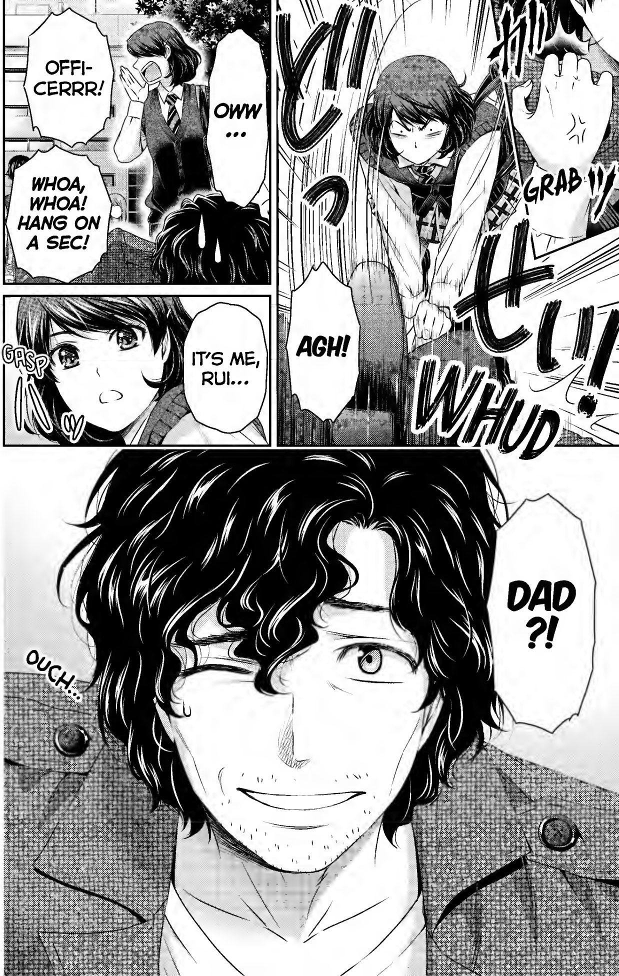

HINA RETURNED MY FEELINGS AND WE GOT TOGETHER,
BUT LOOK HOW IT ENDED UP.
I COULDN'T HAVE BEEN HAPPIER WHILE WE WERE TOGETHER,
BUT SOMETIMES I THINK THAT...
IF I'D JUST KEPT MY FEELINGS BOTTLED UP,
THEN MAYBE HINA WOULD STILL BE HERE.
MAYBE THINGS WOULD BE TOTALLY DIFFERENT NOW.
I WAS SCARED.
SCARED THAT YOU WERE BECOMING A BIGGER PART OF MY LIFE.
SCARED I MIGHT MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE IF I ACT ON MY FEELINGS AGAIN.
BUT...
THAT DILEMMA...
IS MY ANSWER AS TO WHY I DIDN'T AVOID THAT KISS.


HMM.
GOOD JOB.
NOO
PLAP
HWOO!
THAT'S FREEZING!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!
FWIP
YOU'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THAT QUESTION...
ALL THIS TIME?
YOUR HEAD MUST BE FULL OF ROCKS IF IT TOOK YOU THIS MANY SLEEPLESS NIGHTS TO COME UP WITH AN ANSWER.
WELL, SORRRY! I WORKED THINGS OUT AS BEST AS I COULD, Y'KNOW!
BUT THE FACT THAT YOU WORRIED SO MUCH FOR ME...
MAKES ME HAPPY.

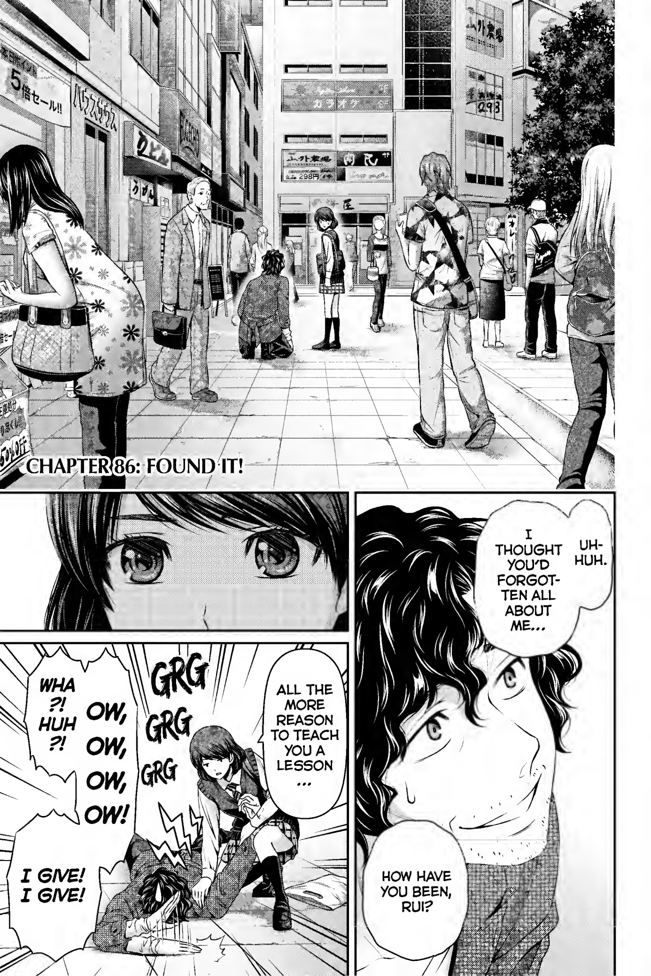

ちゅっ
KISS
IT'S OKAY.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO ACT ON ANYTHING.
I MEAN,
PEOPLE DON'T *HAVE* TO DATE JUST BECAUSE THEY'RE INTERESTED IN EACH OTHER.
I'M SATISFIED JUST KNOWING HOW YOU FEEL.

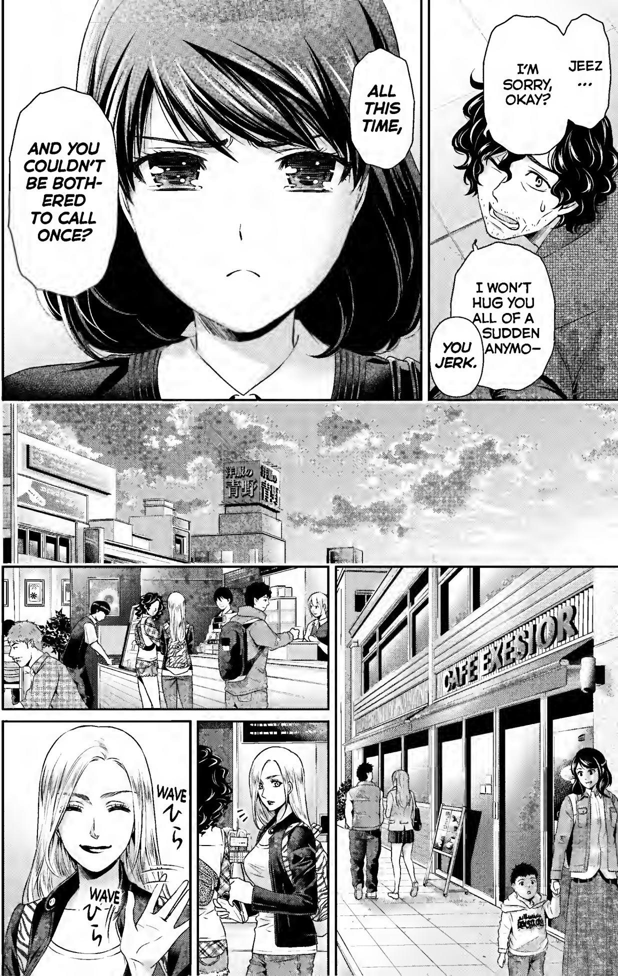

AND IF YOU WON'T TAKE THE INITIATIVE,
THEN I'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE.
THAT'S WORKS, RIGHT?
PFF.
WHAT KIND OF DECLARATION IS THAT?
HMM...
HUNTING SEASON IS ON?
AND I'M THE PREY?
BOOKS 本
ブックストア悠
BOOKSTORE YUU

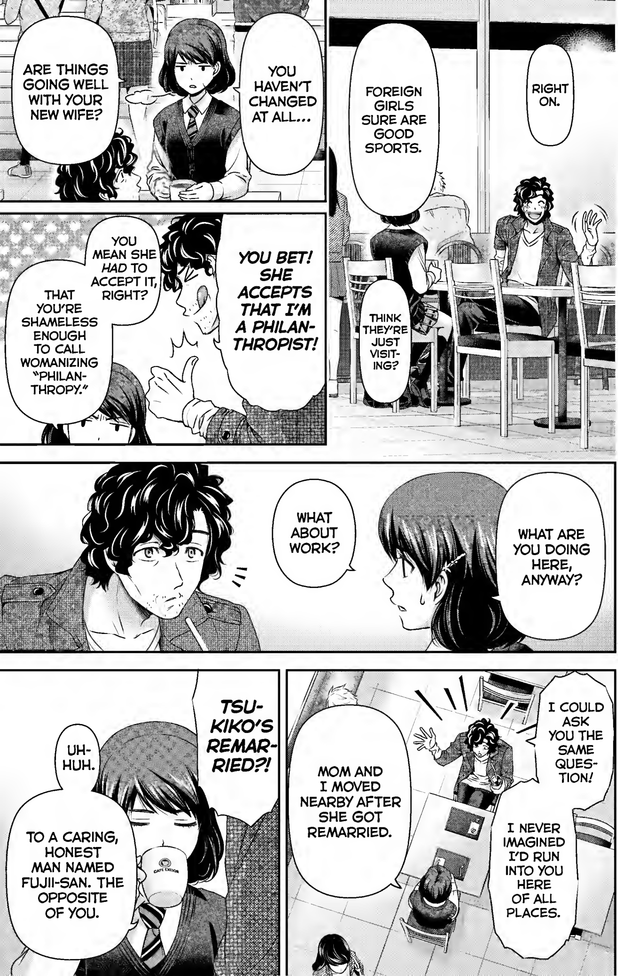

GREEN PAGE
Hit recipes that'll make your man happy!
RUI!
YOUR FACE!
HM?
YOU WERE GRINNING. YOU'VE BEEN IN A GOOD MOOD LATELY, HUH?
GREEN PAGE
WHATCHA READING? "MAKE YOUR MAN HAPPY." "POPULAR RECIPES."
Make Your Man Happy
Healthy and Hearty
POPULAR RECIPES
Staple deliciousness!
YOU HAVE SOMEONE YOU LIKE, RUI?!
N-NO!
IT'S FOR MY FAMILY!
GREEN PAGE
そお…
SWIF
RUIII!
わ
FWAP
ばっ

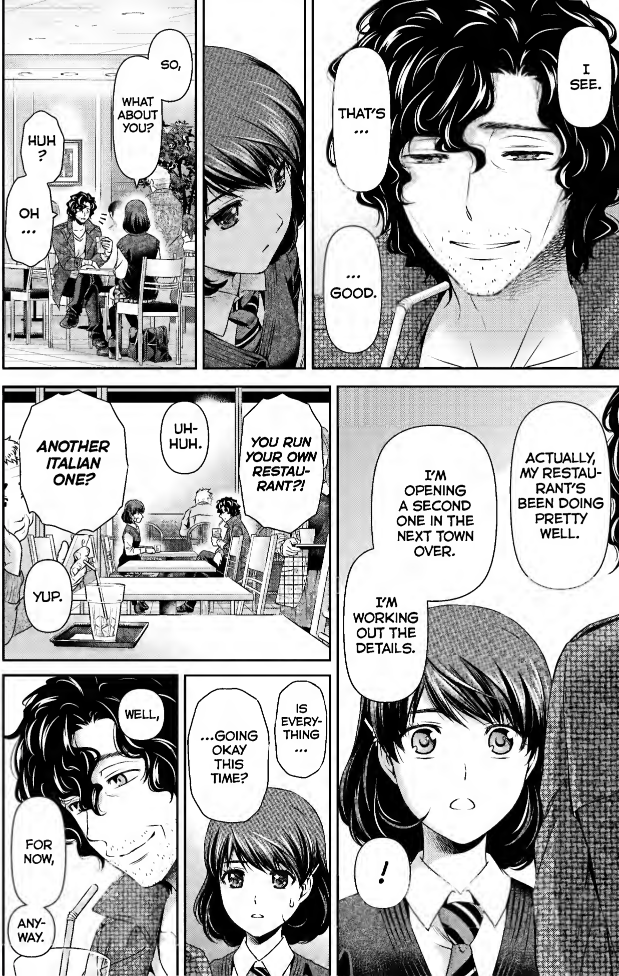

GRAB
AGH!
WHUD
OFFI-CERRR!
OWW...
WHOA, WHOA! HANG ON A SEC!
IT'S ME, RUI...
GASP
DAD?!
OUCH...

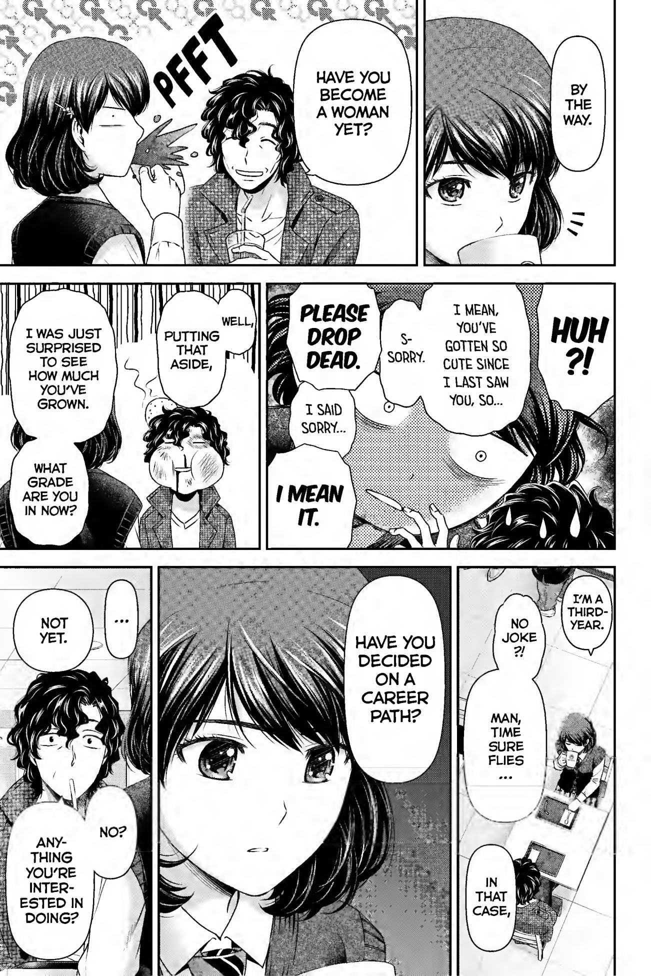
CHAPTER 86: FOUND IT!

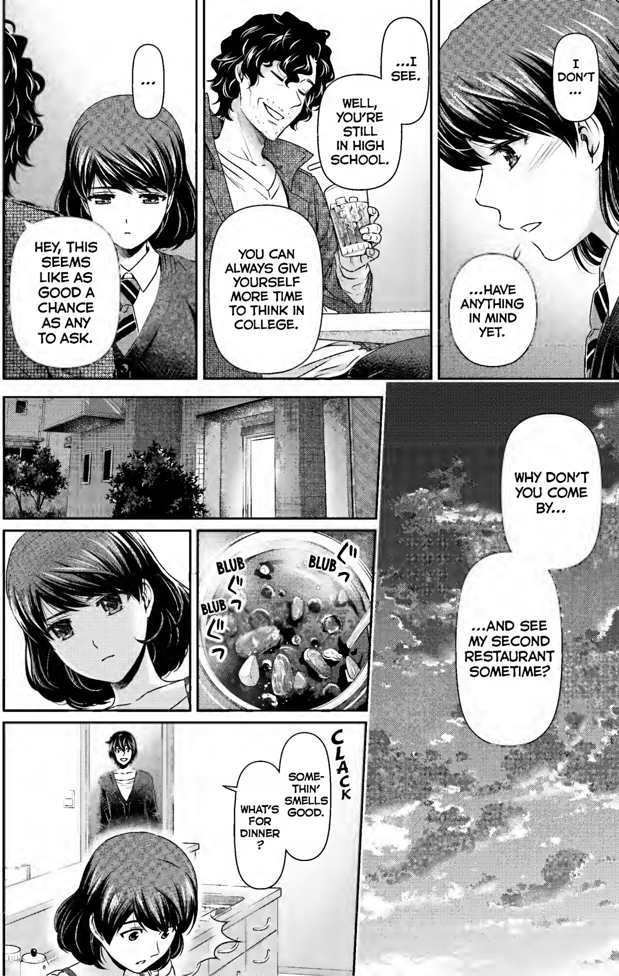

I THOUGHT YOU'D FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT ME...
UH-HUH.
HOW HAVE YOU BEEN, RUI?
ALL THE MORE REASON TO TEACH YOU A LESSON...
GRG
GRG
GRG
OW, OW, OW, OW!
WHA?! HUH?!
I GIVE! I GIVE!

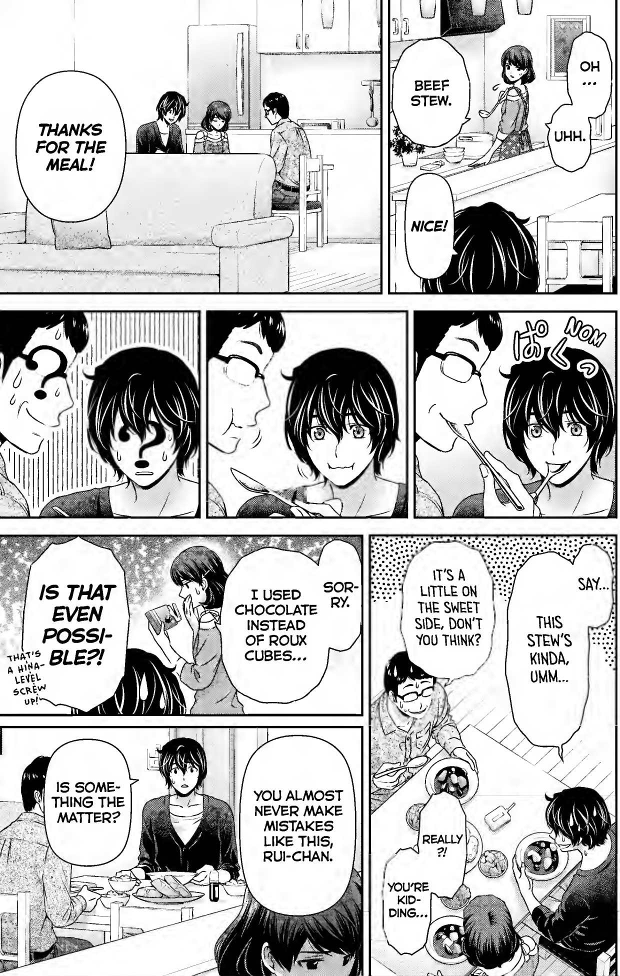

JEEZ...
I'M SORRY, OKAY?
I WON'T HUG YOU ALL OF A SUDDEN ANYMO—
YOU JERK.
ALL THIS TIME,
AND YOU COULDN'T BE BOTHERED TO CALL ONCE?
洋服の 青野
洋服の 青野
CAFE EXESIOR
WAVE ひら
WAVE ひら

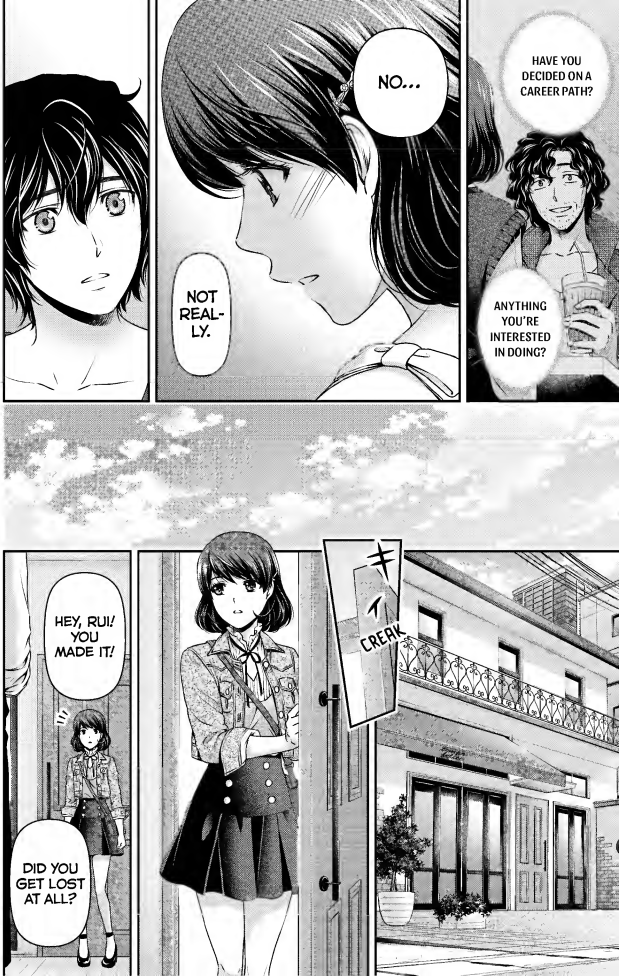

RIGHT ON.
FOREIGN GIRLS SURE ARE GOOD SPORTS.
THINK THEY'RE JUST VISITING?
YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED AT ALL...
ARE THINGS GOING WELL WITH YOUR NEW WIFE?
YOU BET! SHE ACCEPTS THAT I'M A PHILANTHROPIST!
YOU MEAN SHE *HAD* TO ACCEPT IT, RIGHT?
THAT YOU'RE SHAMELESS ENOUGH TO CALL WOMANIZING "PHILANTHROPY."
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, ANYWAY?
WHAT ABOUT WORK?
I COULD ASK YOU THE SAME QUESTION!
I NEVER IMAGINED I'D RUN INTO YOU HERE OF ALL PLACES.
MOM AND I MOVED NEARBY AFTER SHE GOT REMARRIED.
TSUKIKO'S REMARRIED?!
UH-HUH.
TO A CARING, HONEST MAN NAMED FUJII-SAN. THE OPPOSITE OF YOU.

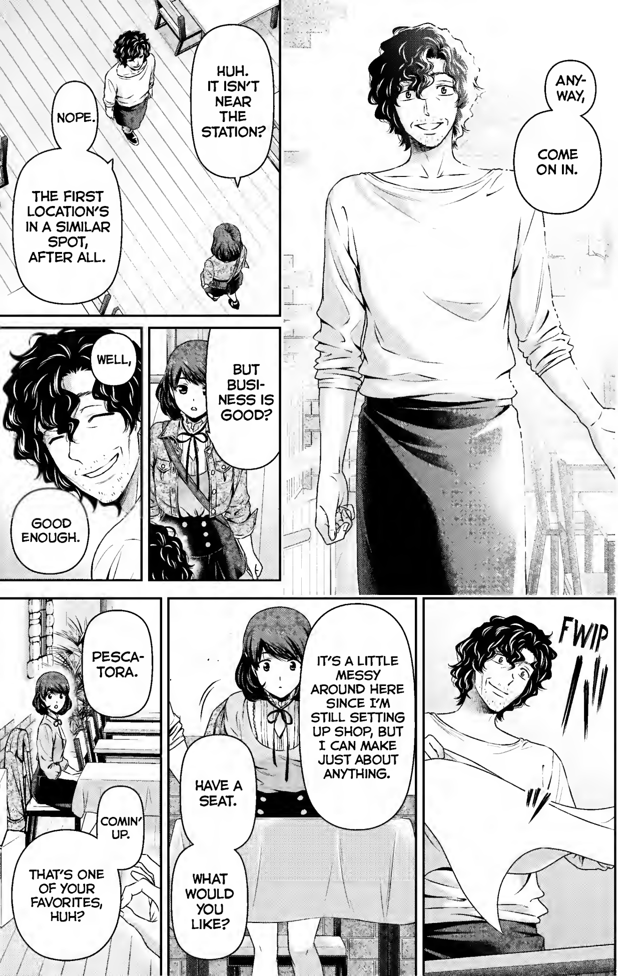

I SEE.
THAT'S...
...GOOD.
SO, WHAT ABOUT YOU?
HUH?
OH...
ACTUALLY, MY RESTAURANT'S BEEN DOING PRETTY WELL.
I'M OPENING A SECOND ONE IN THE NEXT TOWN OVER.
I'M WORKING OUT THE DETAILS.
!
YOU RUN YOUR OWN RESTAURANT?!
UH-HUH.
ANOTHER ITALIAN ONE?
YUP.
IS EVERYTHING...
...GOING OKAY THIS TIME?
WELL,
FOR NOW,
ANYWAY.

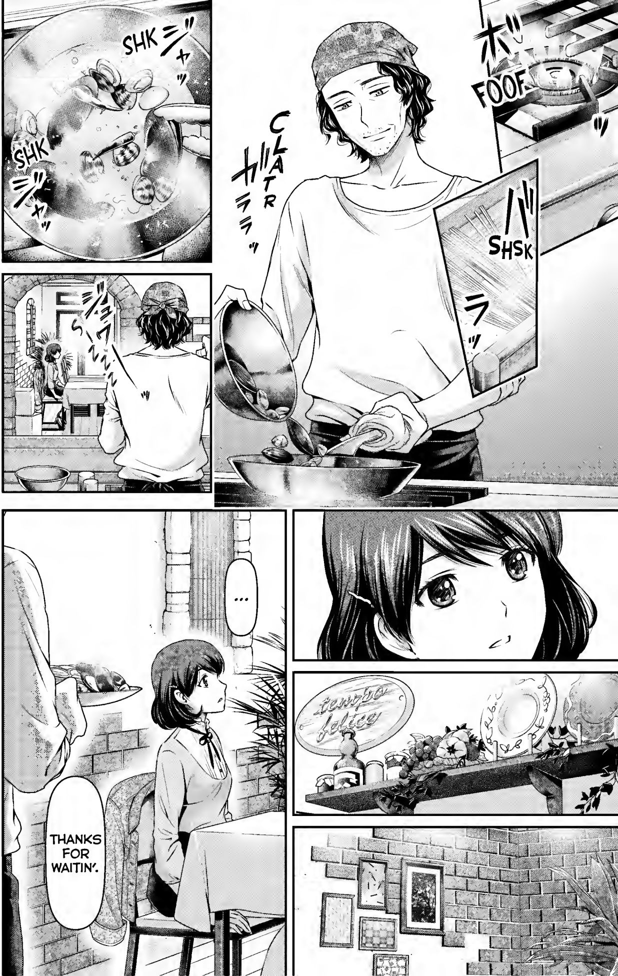

BY THE WAY.
HAVE YOU BECOME A WOMAN YET?
PFFT
HUH?!
I MEAN, YOU'VE GOTTEN SO CUTE SINCE I LAST SAW YOU, SO...
S- SORRY.
PLEASE DROP DEAD.
I SAID SORRY...
I MEAN IT.
WELL, PUTTING THAT ASIDE,
I WAS JUST SURPRISED TO SEE HOW MUCH YOU'VE GROWN.
WHAT GRADE ARE YOU IN NOW?
I'M A THIRD-YEAR.
NO JOKE?!
MAN, TIME SURE FLIES...
IN THAT CASE,
HAVE YOU DECIDED ON A CAREER PATH?
...
NOT YET.
NO?
ANYTHING YOU'RE INTERESTED IN DOING?

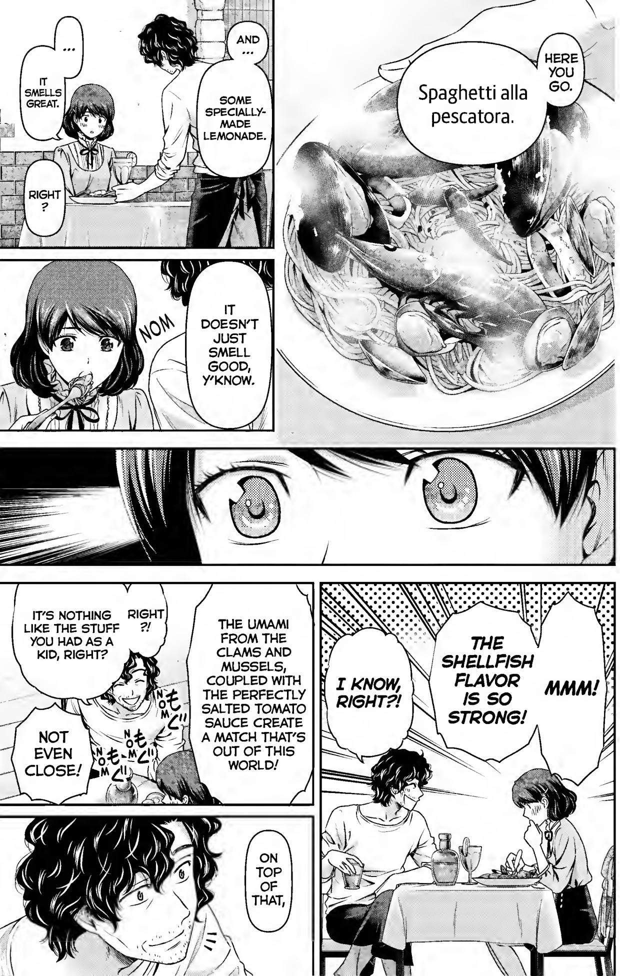

I DON'T...
...HAVE ANYTHING IN MIND YET.
...I SEE.
WELL, YOU'RE STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL.
YOU CAN ALWAYS GIVE YOURSELF MORE TIME TO THINK IN COLLEGE.
...
HEY, THIS SEEMS LIKE AS GOOD A CHANCE AS ANY TO ASK.
WHY DON'T YOU COME BY...
...AND SEE MY SECOND RESTAURANT SOMETIME?
BLUB ぐつ
BLUB ぐつ
BLUB ぐつ
CLACK
SOMETHIN' SMELLS GOOD.
WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

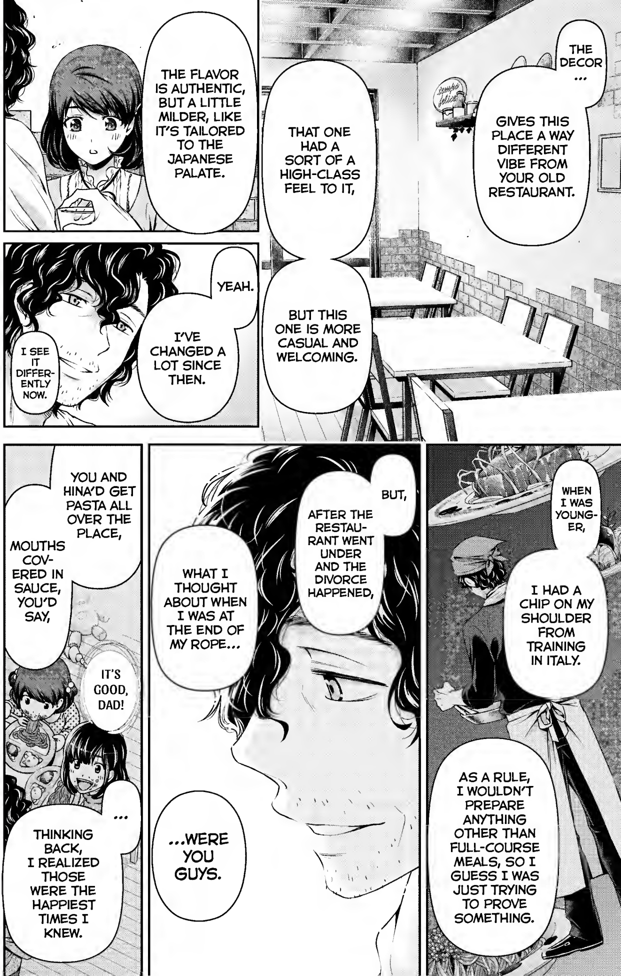

OH ...
UHH.
BEEF STEW.
NICE!
THANKS FOR THE MEAL!
ぱくっ NOM
SAY...
THIS STEW'S KINDA, UMM...
IT'S A LITTLE ON THE SWEET SIDE, DON'T YOU THINK?
REALLY ?!
YOU'RE KIDDING...
SORRY.
I USED CHOCOLATE INSTEAD OF ROUX CUBES...
IS THAT EVEN POSSIBLE?!
THAT'S A HINA-LEVEL SCREW UP!
YOU ALMOST NEVER MAKE MISTAKES LIKE THIS, RUI-CHAN.
IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?

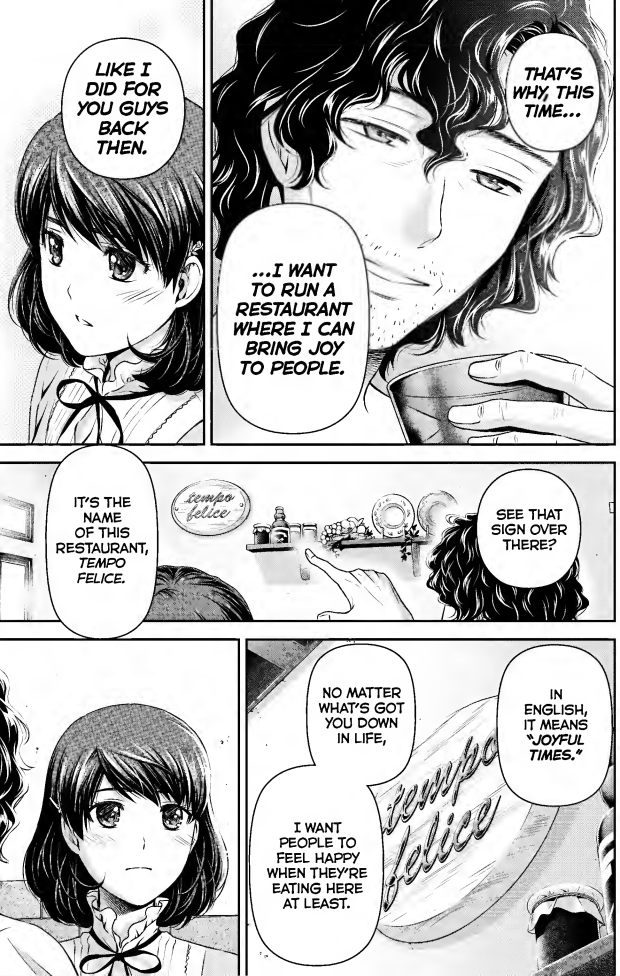

HAVE YOU DECIDED ON A CAREER PATH?
ANYTHING YOU'RE INTERESTED IN DOING?
NO...
NOT REALLY.
キィ
CREAK
HEY, RUI! YOU MADE IT!
DID YOU GET LOST AT ALL?

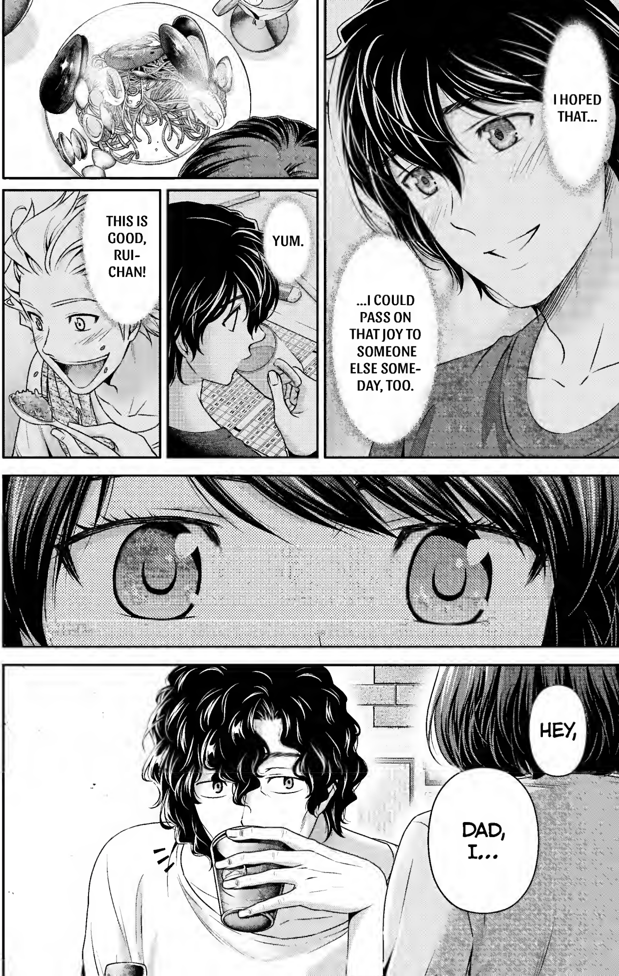

HUH. IT ISN'T NEAR THE STATION?
NOPE.
THE FIRST LOCATION'S IN A SIMILAR SPOT, AFTER ALL.
BUT BUSINESS IS GOOD?
WELL,
GOOD ENOUGH.
ANY-WAY,
COME ON IN.
FWIP
IT'S A LITTLE MESSY AROUND HERE SINCE I'M STILL SETTING UP SHOP, BUT I CAN MAKE JUST ABOUT ANYTHING.
HAVE A SEAT.
WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE?
PESCA-TORA.
COMIN' UP.
THAT'S ONE OF YOUR FAVORITES, HUH?

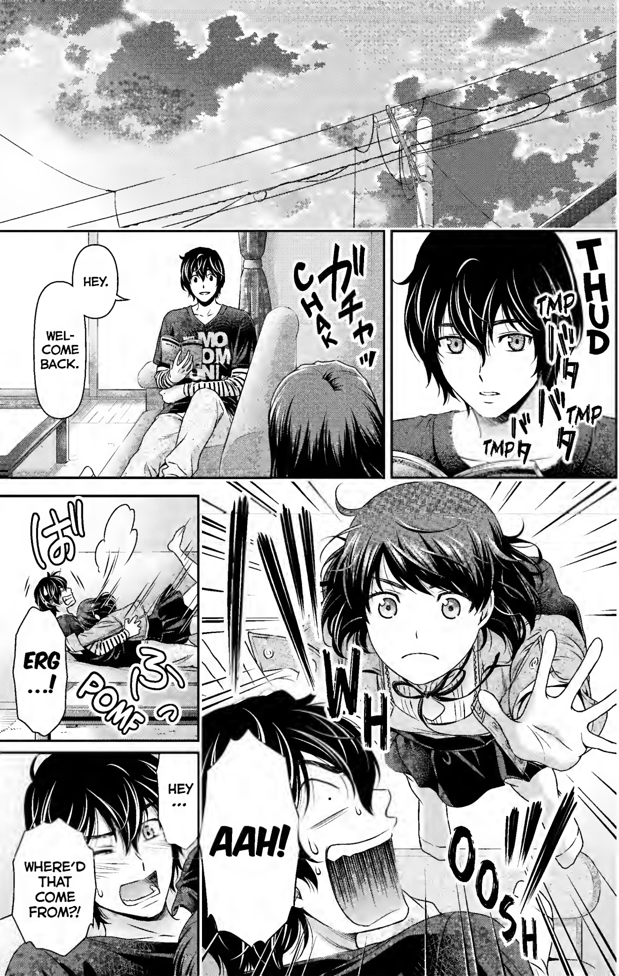

ボッ
FOOF
ッ
カラララッ
CLATR
バラッ
SHSK
ジャッ
SHK
ジャッ
SHK
ジュワ
tempo felice
…
THANKS FOR WAITIN'.

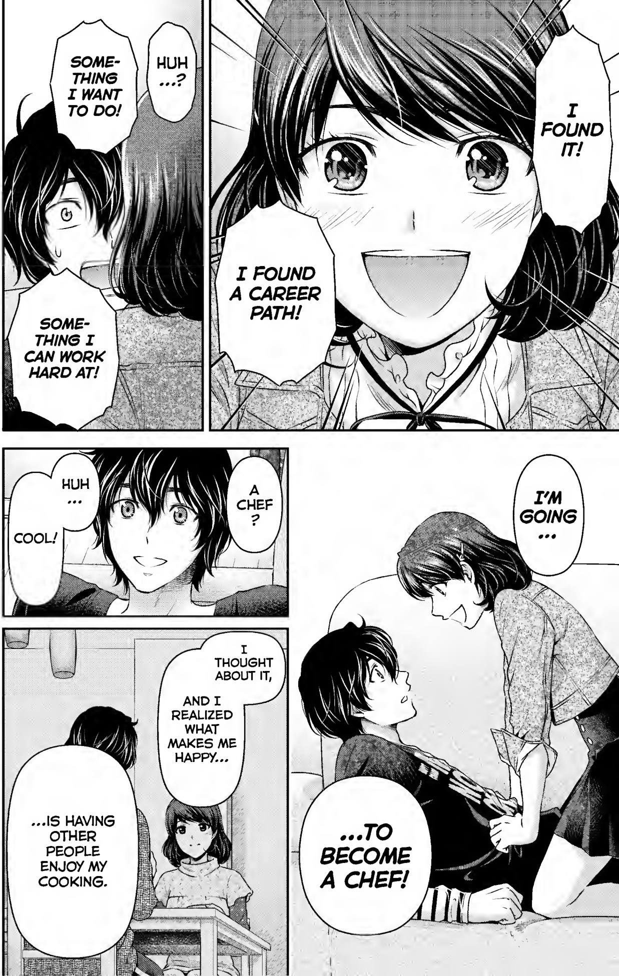

HERE YOU GO.
Spaghetti alla pescatora.
AND ...
SOME SPECIALLY-MADE LEMONADE.
...
IT SMELLS GREAT.
RIGHT?
NOM
IT DOESN'T JUST SMELL GOOD, Y'KNOW.
MMM!
THE SHELLFISH FLAVOR IS SO STRONG!
I KNOW, RIGHT?!
RIGHT?!
IT'S NOTHING LIKE THE STUFF YOU HAD AS A KID, RIGHT?
THE UMAMI FROM THE CLAMS AND MUSSELS, COUPLED WITH THE PERFECTLY SALTED TOMATO SAUCE CREATE A MATCH THAT'S OUT OF THIS WORLD!
NOMもぐ NOMもぐ NOMもぐ
NOT EVEN CLOSE!
ON TOP OF THAT,

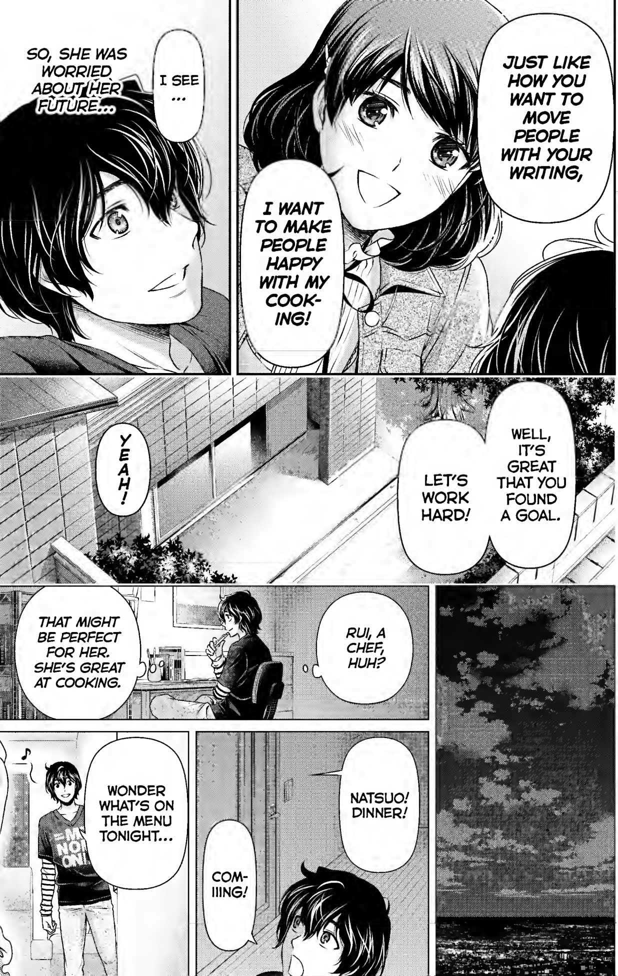

THE DECOR...
GIVES THIS PLACE A WAY DIFFERENT VIBE FROM YOUR OLD RESTAURANT.
THAT ONE HAD A SORT OF A HIGH-CLASS FEEL TO IT,
BUT THIS ONE IS MORE CASUAL AND WELCOMING.
THE FLAVOR IS AUTHENTIC, BUT A LITTLE MILDER, LIKE IT'S TAILORED TO THE JAPANESE PALATE.
YEAH.
I'VE CHANGED A LOT SINCE THEN.
I SEE IT DIFFERENTLY NOW.
WHEN I WAS YOUNGER,
I HAD A CHIP ON MY SHOULDER FROM TRAINING IN ITALY.
AS A RULE, I WOULDN'T PREPARE ANYTHING OTHER THAN FULL-COURSE MEALS, SO I GUESS I WAS JUST TRYING TO PROVE SOMETHING.
BUT,
AFTER THE RESTAURANT WENT UNDER AND THE DIVORCE HAPPENED,
WHAT I THOUGHT ABOUT WHEN I WAS AT THE END OF MY ROPE...
...WERE YOU GUYS.
YOU AND HINA'D GET PASTA ALL OVER THE PLACE,
MOUTHS COVERED IN SAUCE, YOU'D SAY,
IT'S GOOD, DAD!
...
THINKING BACK, I REALIZED THOSE WERE THE HAPPIEST TIMES I KNEW.

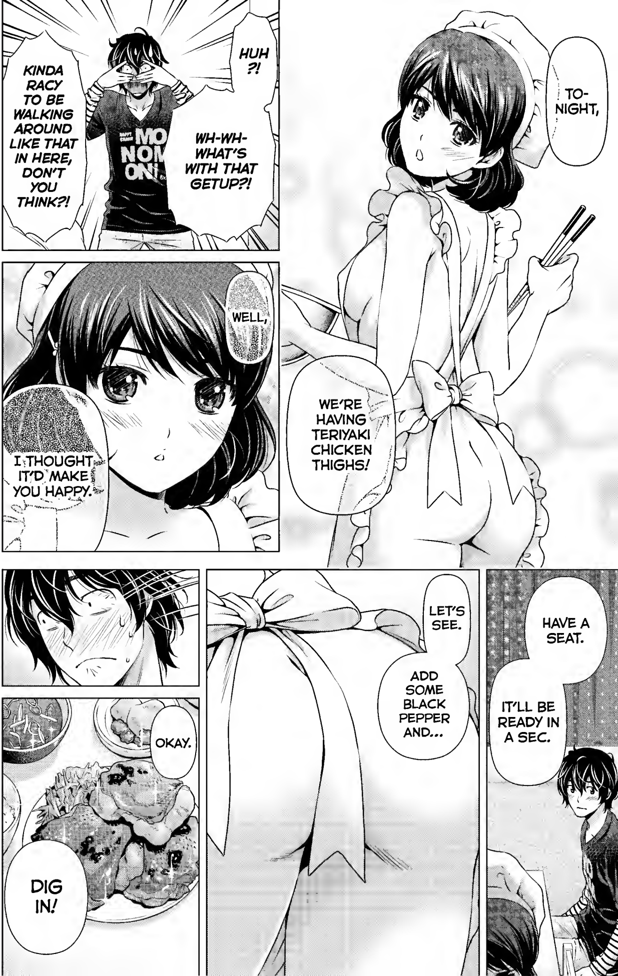

THAT'S WHY, THIS TIME...
...I WANT TO RUN A RESTAURANT WHERE I CAN BRING JOY TO PEOPLE.
LIKE I DID FOR YOU GUYS BACK THEN.
SEE THAT SIGN OVER THERE?
tempo felice
IT'S THE NAME OF THIS RESTAURANT, *TEMPO FELICE*.
IN ENGLISH, IT MEANS *"JOYFUL TIMES."*
NO MATTER WHAT'S GOT YOU DOWN IN LIFE,
I WANT PEOPLE TO FEEL HAPPY WHEN THEY'RE EATING HERE AT LEAST.
tempo felice

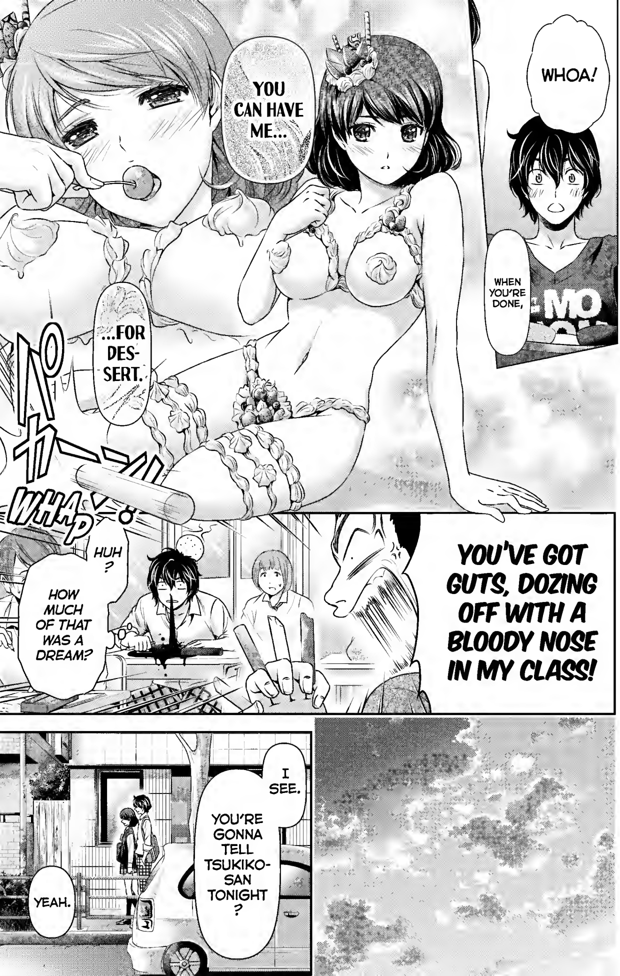

I HOPED THAT...
...I COULD PASS ON THAT JOY TO SOMEONE ELSE SOMEDAY, TOO.
YUM.
THIS IS GOOD, RUI-CHAN!
HEY,
DAD, I...

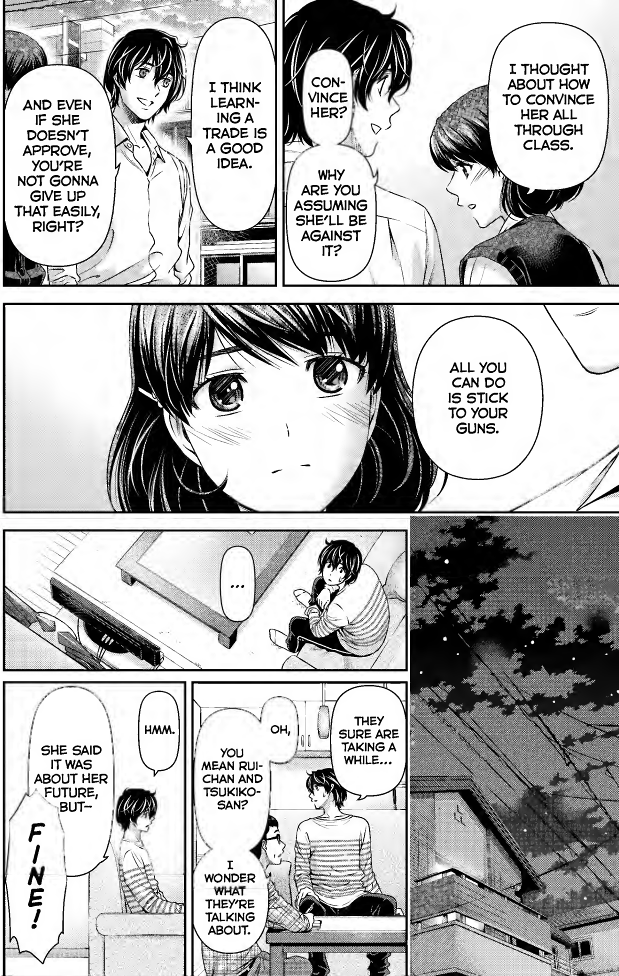

THUD
TMP バタ TMP バタ TMP バタ
ガチャッ CHAK
HEY.
WEL-COME BACK.
WH OOSH
ばふっ POMF
ERG …!
AAH!
HEY …
WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?!

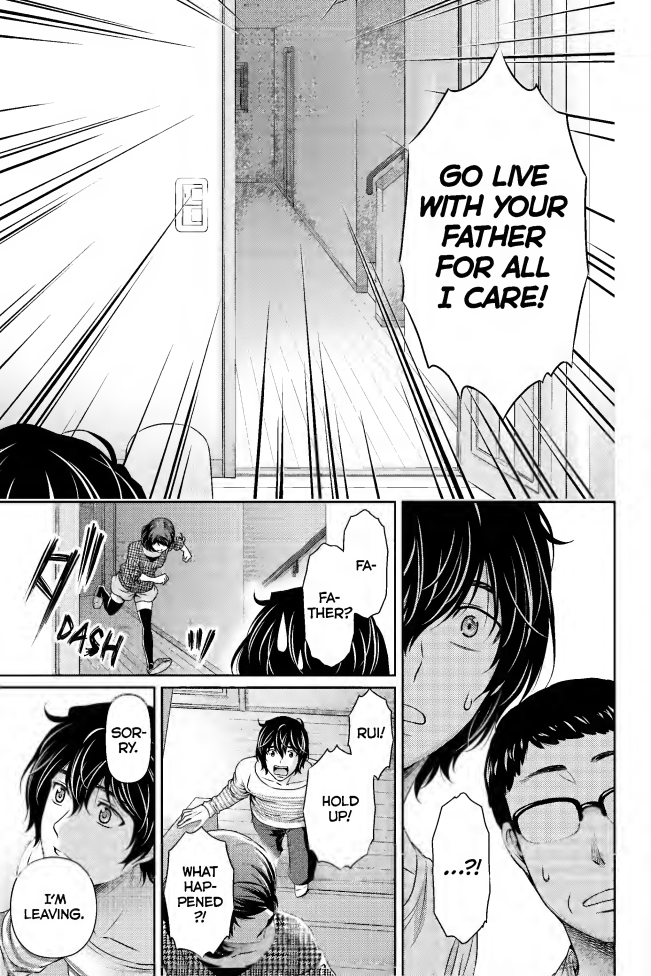

I FOUND IT!
I FOUND A CAREER PATH!
HUH...?
SOMETHING I WANT TO DO!
SOMETHING I CAN WORK HARD AT!
I'M GOING...
...TO BECOME A CHEF!
A CHEF?
HUH... COOL!
I THOUGHT ABOUT IT,
AND I REALIZED WHAT MAKES ME HAPPY...
...IS HAVING OTHER PEOPLE ENJOY MY COOKING.

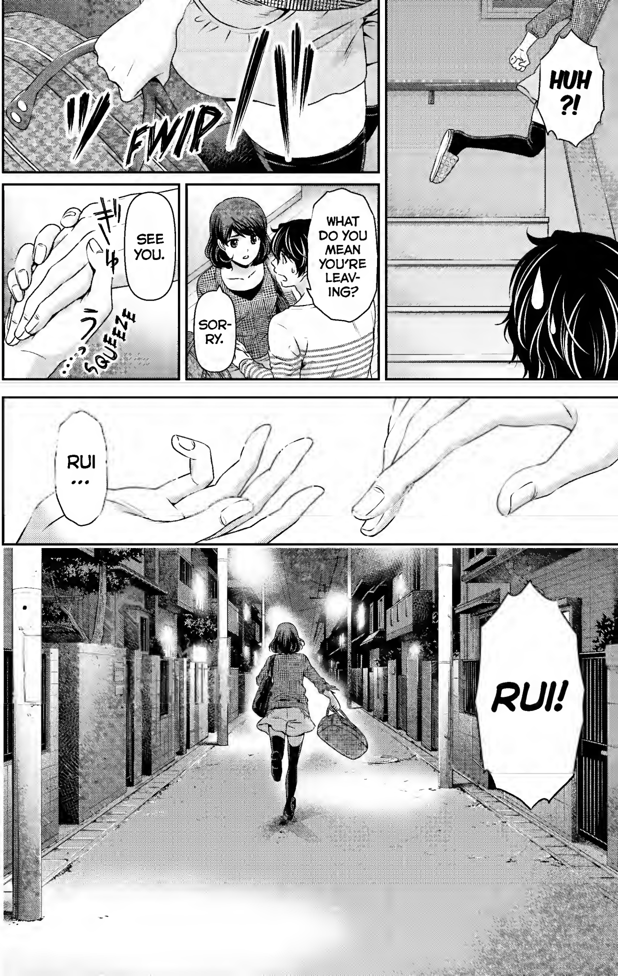

JUST LIKE HOW YOU WANT TO MOVE PEOPLE WITH YOUR WRITING,
I WANT TO MAKE PEOPLE HAPPY WITH MY COOKING!
I SEE ...
SO, SHE WAS WORRIED ABOUT HER FUTURE...
WELL, IT'S GREAT THAT YOU FOUND A GOAL.
LET'S WORK HARD!
YEAH!
RUI, A CHEF, HUH?
THAT MIGHT BE PERFECT FOR HER. SHE'S GREAT AT COOKING.
NATSUO! DINNER!
COMIIING!
♪
WONDER WHAT'S ON THE MENU TONIGHT...


TO-NIGHT,
WE'RE HAVING TERIYAKI CHICKEN THIGHS!
HUH?!
WH-WH-WHAT'S WITH THAT GETUP?!
KINDA RACY TO BE WALKING AROUND LIKE THAT IN HERE, DON'T YOU THINK?!
WELL,
I THOUGHT IT'D MAKE YOU HAPPY.
HAVE A SEAT.
IT'LL BE READY IN A SEC.
LET'S SEE.
ADD SOME BLACK PEPPER AND...
OKAY.
DIG IN!

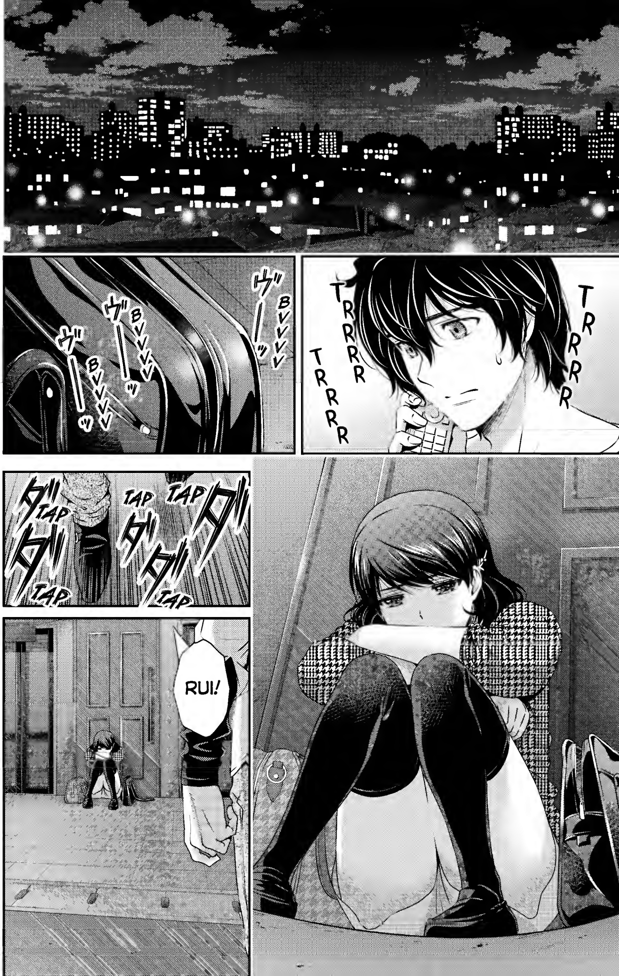

WHOA!
WHEN YOU'RE DONE,
YOU CAN HAVE ME...
...FOR DESSERT.
パカーンッ
WHAP
YOU'VE GOT GUTS, DOZING OFF WITH A BLOODY NOSE IN MY CLASS!
HUH?
HOW MUCH OF THAT WAS A DREAM?
I SEE.
YOU'RE GONNA TELL TSUKIKO-SAN TONIGHT?
YEAH.

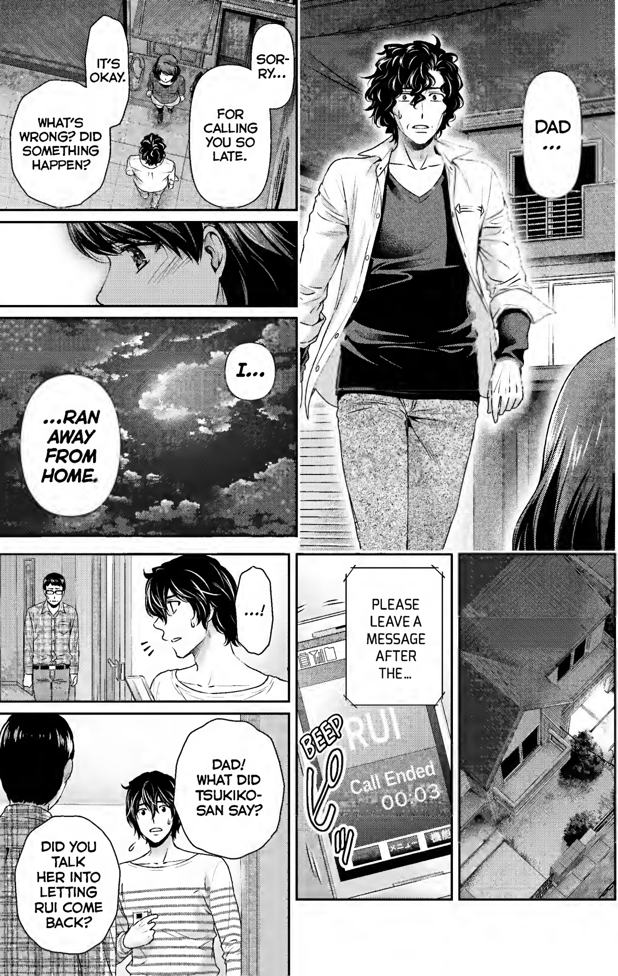

I THOUGHT ABOUT HOW TO CONVINCE HER ALL THROUGH CLASS.
CONVINCE HER?
WHY ARE YOU ASSUMING SHE'LL BE AGAINST IT?
I THINK LEARNING A TRADE IS A GOOD IDEA.
AND EVEN IF SHE DOESN'T APPROVE, YOU'RE NOT GONNA GIVE UP THAT EASILY, RIGHT?
ALL YOU CAN DO IS STICK TO YOUR GUNS.
...
THEY SURE ARE TAKING A WHILE...
OH,
YOU MEAN RUI-CHAN AND TSUKIKO-SAN?
I WONDER WHAT THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT.
HMM.
SHE SAID IT WAS ABOUT HER FUTURE, BUT–
FINE!

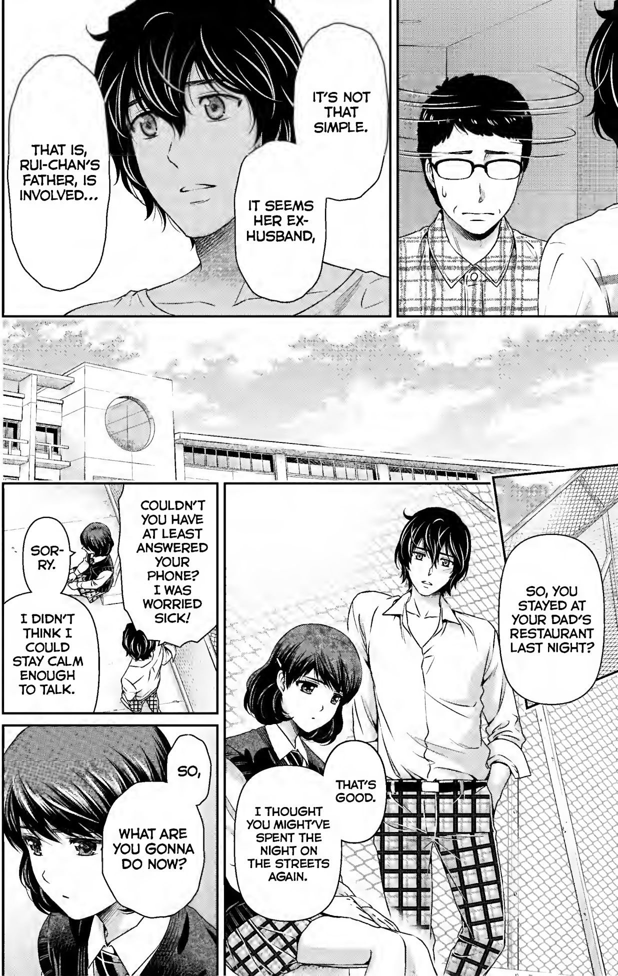

GO LIVE WITH YOUR FATHER FOR ALL I CARE!
DASH
FA-
FA-THER?
...?!
RUI!
HOLD UP!
WHAT HAPPENED?!
SORRY.
I'M LEAVING.

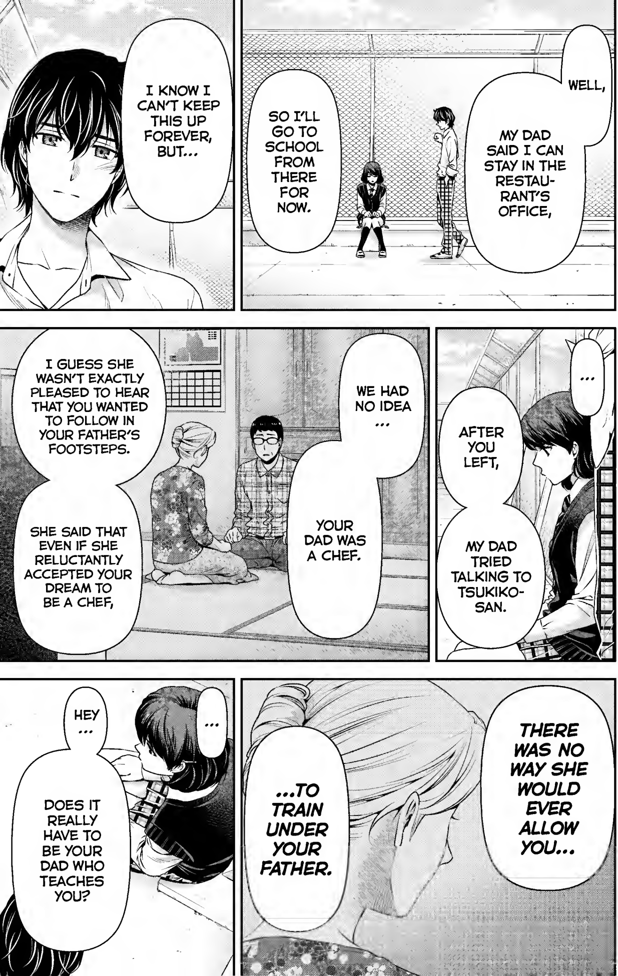

WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU'RE LEAVING?
SORRY.
SEE YOU.
ぎゅ
う…
SQUEEZE
FWIP
HUH ?!
RUI …
RUI!

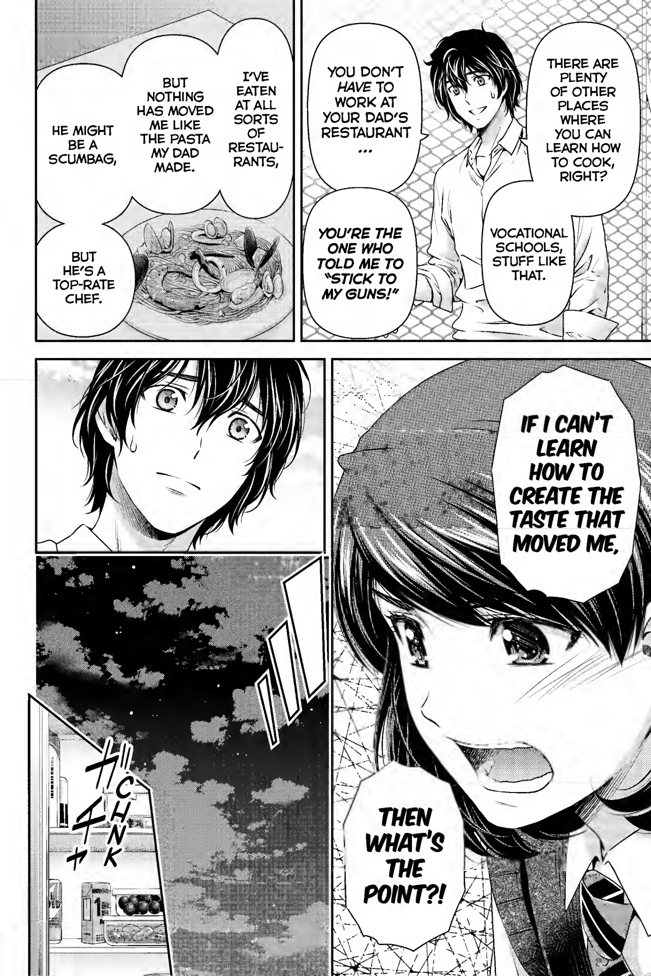
CHAPTER 87: WHAT MAKES ONE HAPPIEST

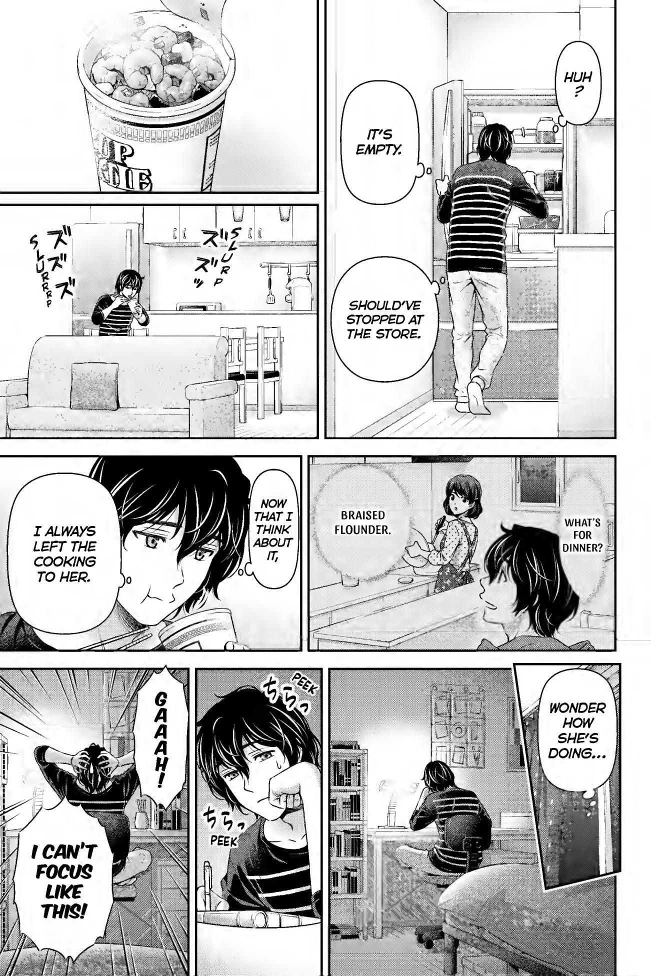

TRRRR
TRRRR
TRRRR
ヴーッ
BVVVV
ヴーッ
BVVVV
ヴーッ
BVVVV
ダッ
TAP
ダッ
TAP
ダッ
TAP
ダッ
TAP
RUI!

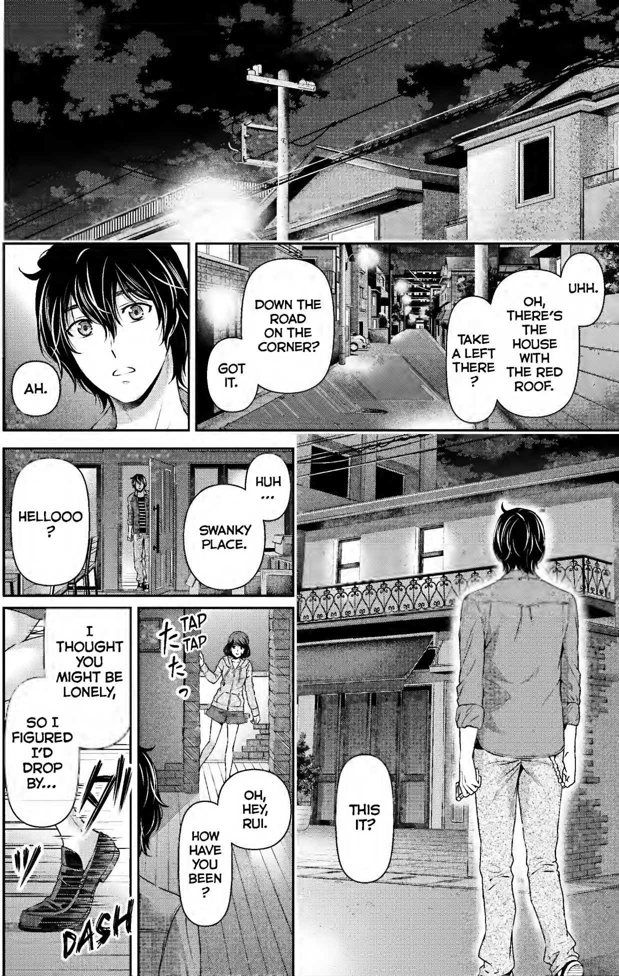

SORRY...
FOR CALLING YOU SO LATE.
IT'S OKAY.
WHAT'S WRONG? DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
I...
...RAN AWAY FROM HOME.
DAD...
...!
PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE AFTER THE...
BEEP
RUI
Call Ended
00:03
DAD! WHAT DID TSUKIKO-SAN SAY?
DID YOU TALK HER INTO LETTING RUI COME BACK?

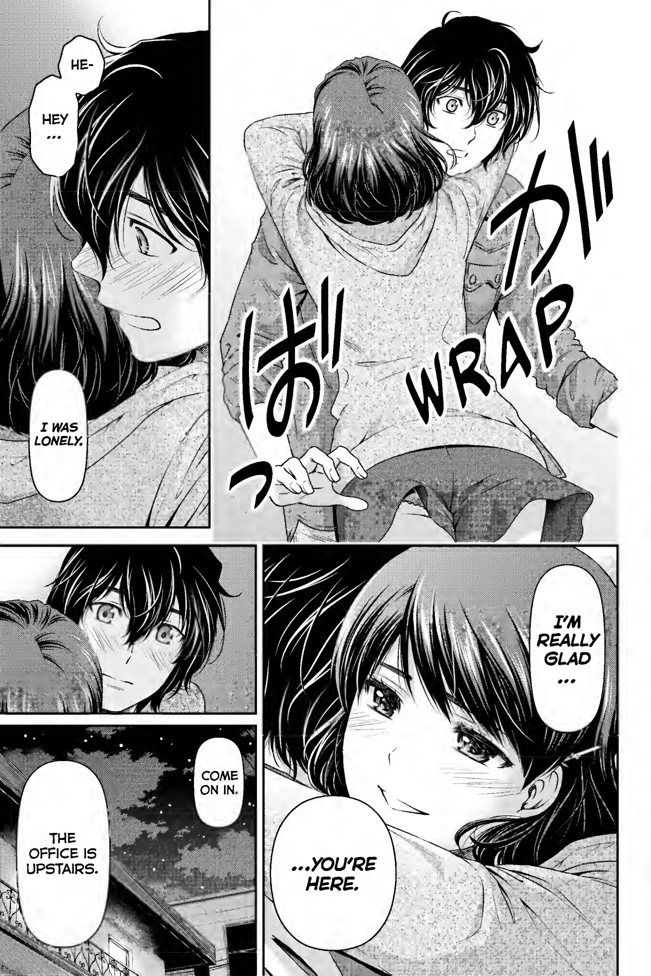

IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE.
IT SEEMS HER EX-HUSBAND,
THAT IS, RUI-CHAN'S FATHER, IS INVOLVED...
SO, YOU STAYED AT YOUR DAD'S RESTAURANT LAST NIGHT?
THAT'S GOOD.
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT'VE SPENT THE NIGHT ON THE STREETS AGAIN.
COULDN'T YOU HAVE AT LEAST ANSWERED YOUR PHONE? I WAS WORRIED SICK!
SORRY.
I DIDN'T THINK I COULD STAY CALM ENOUGH TO TALK.
SO,
WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO NOW?

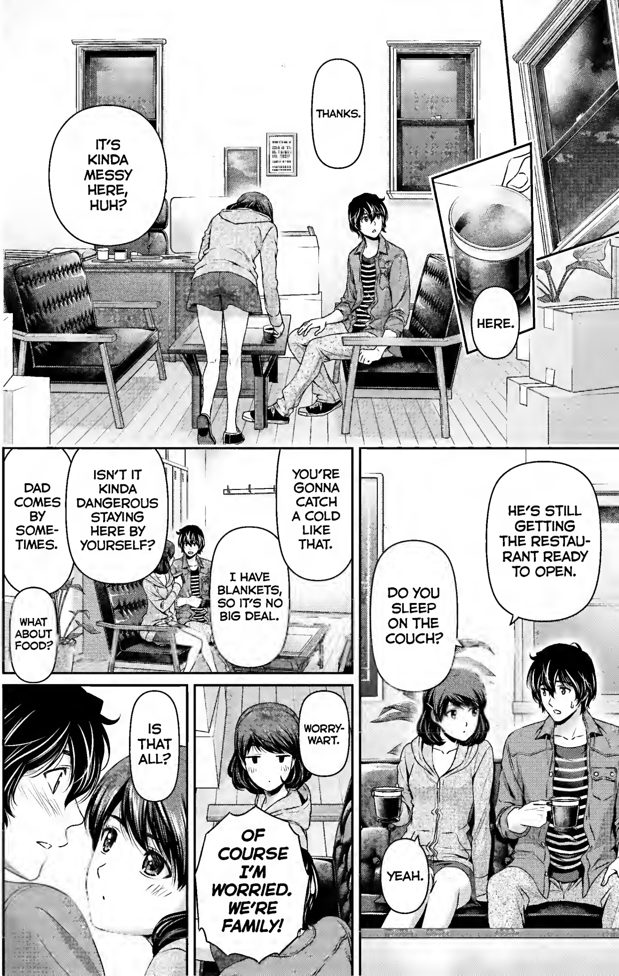

WELL,
MY DAD SAID I CAN STAY IN THE RESTAURANT'S OFFICE,
SO I'LL GO TO SCHOOL FROM THERE FOR NOW.
I KNOW I CAN'T KEEP THIS UP FOREVER, BUT...
...
AFTER YOU LEFT,
MY DAD TRIED TALKING TO TSUKIKO-SAN.
WE HAD NO IDEA...
YOUR DAD WAS A CHEF.
I GUESS SHE WASN'T EXACTLY PLEASED TO HEAR THAT YOU WANTED TO FOLLOW IN YOUR FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS.
SHE SAID THAT EVEN IF SHE RELUCTANTLY ACCEPTED YOUR DREAM TO BE A CHEF,
THERE WAS NO WAY SHE WOULD EVER ALLOW YOU...
...TO TRAIN UNDER YOUR FATHER.
...
HEY...
DOES IT REALLY HAVE TO BE YOUR DAD WHO TEACHES YOU?

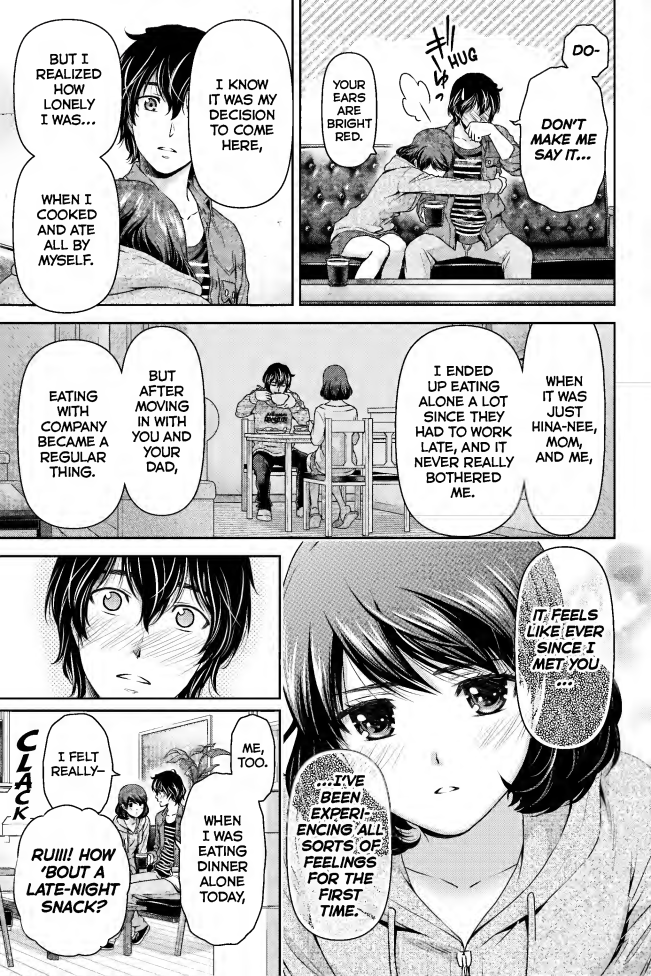

THERE ARE PLENTY OF OTHER PLACES WHERE YOU CAN LEARN HOW TO COOK, RIGHT?
VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS, STUFF LIKE THAT.
YOU DON'T *HAVE* TO WORK AT YOUR DAD'S RESTAURANT ...
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO TOLD ME TO "STICK TO MY GUNS!"
I'VE EATEN AT ALL SORTS OF RESTAURANTS,
BUT NOTHING HAS MOVED ME LIKE THE PASTA MY DAD MADE.
HE MIGHT BE A SCUMBAG,
BUT HE'S A TOP-RATE CHEF.
IF I CAN'T LEARN HOW TO CREATE THE TASTE THAT MOVED ME,
THEN WHAT'S THE POINT?!
ガチャ
CHNK

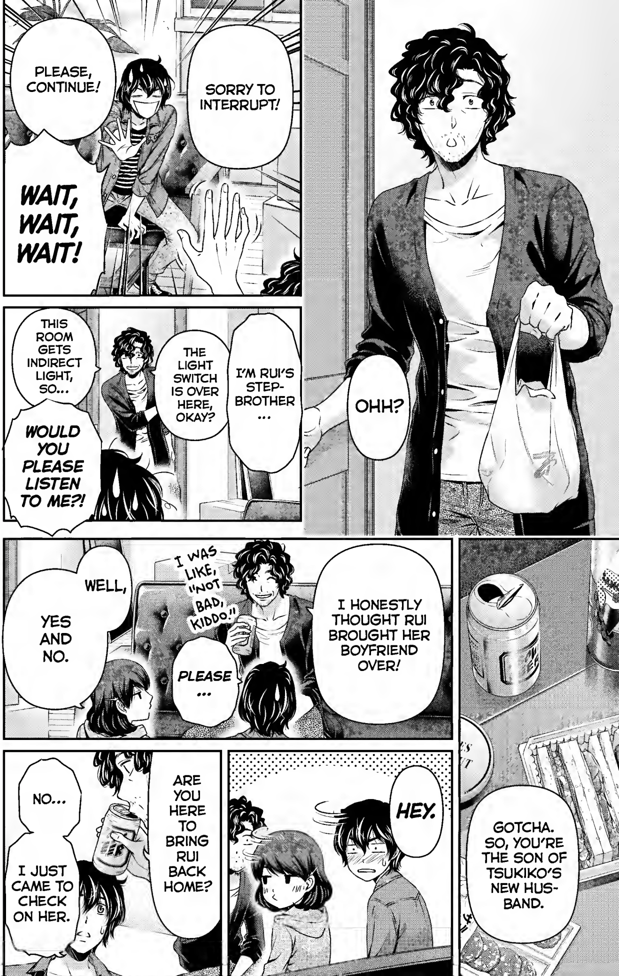

HUH?
IT'S EMPTY.
SHOULD'VE STOPPED AT THE STORE.
ズズズッ SLURP
ズズズ SLURRRP
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT,
I ALWAYS LEFT THE COOKING TO HER.
WHAT'S FOR DINNER?
BRAISED FLOUNDER.
WONDER HOW SHE'S DOING...
ちらっ PEEK
ちらっ PEEK
GAAAH!
I CAN'T FOCUS LIKE THIS!

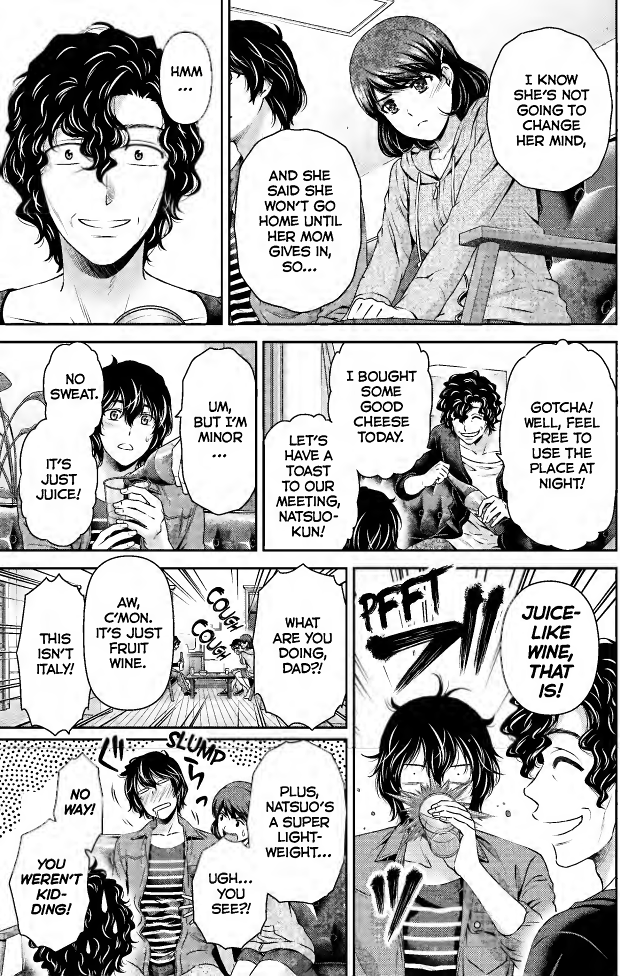

UHH.
OH, THERE'S THE HOUSE WITH THE RED ROOF.
TAKE A LEFT THERE?
DOWN THE ROAD ON THE CORNER?
GOT IT.
AH.
THIS IT?
HUH... SWANKY PLACE.
HELLOOO?
TAP TAP たたっ
OH, HEY, RUI.
HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE LONELY,
SO I FIGURED I'D DROP BY...
DASH

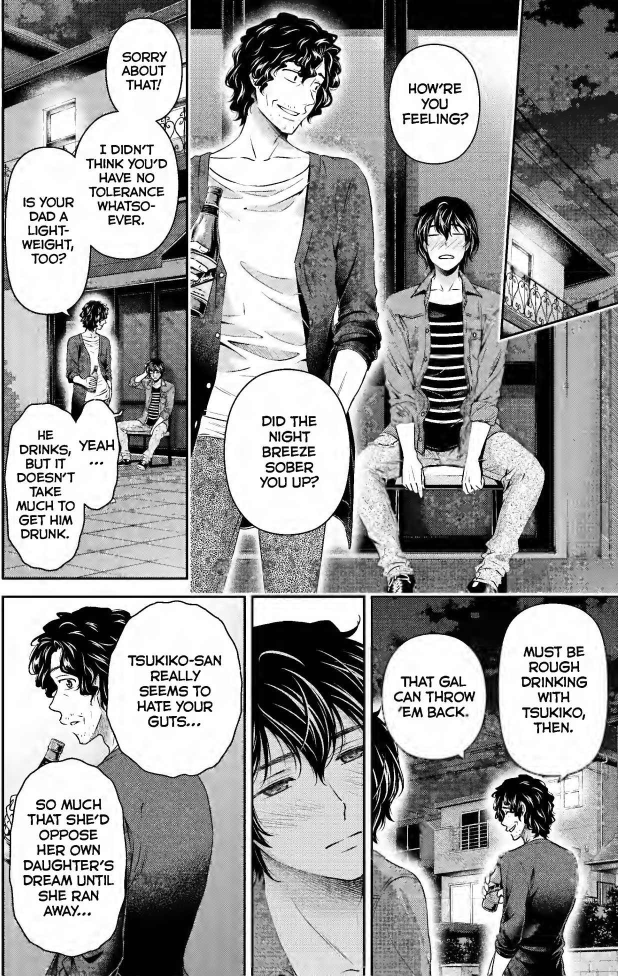

がばっ
WRAP
HE-
HEY...
I WAS LONELY.
I'M REALLY GLAD...
...YOU'RE HERE.
COME ON IN.
THE OFFICE IS UPSTAIRS.

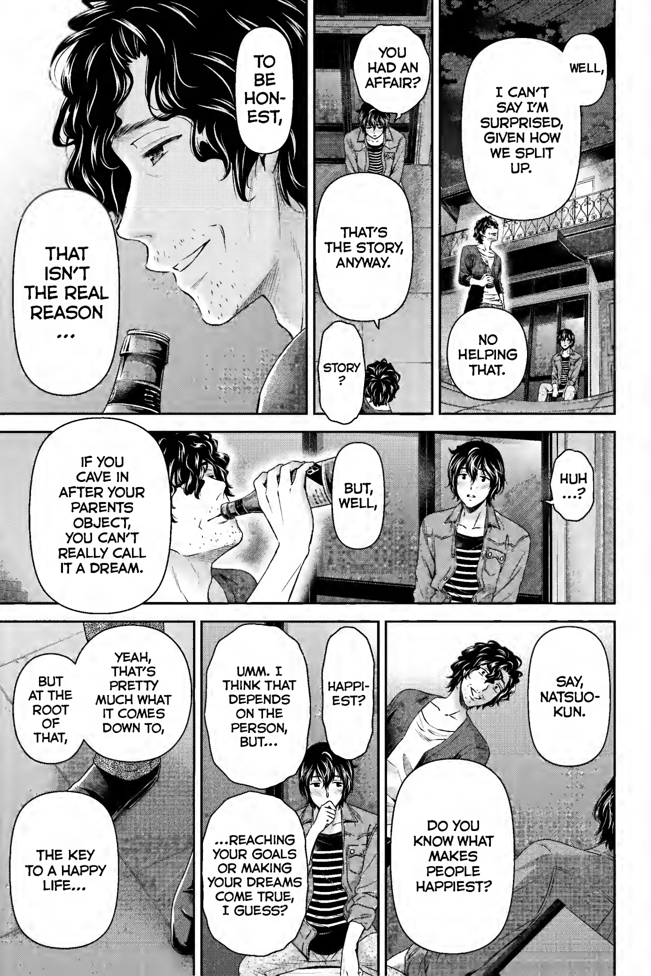

HERE.
THANKS.
IT'S KINDA MESSY HERE, HUH?
HE'S STILL GETTING THE RESTAURANT READY TO OPEN.
DO YOU SLEEP ON THE COUCH?
YEAH.
YOU'RE GONNA CATCH A COLD LIKE THAT.
I HAVE BLANKETS, SO IT'S NO BIG DEAL.
ISN'T IT KINDA DANGEROUS STAYING HERE BY YOURSELF?
DAD COMES BY SOMETIMES.
WHAT ABOUT FOOD?
WORRYWART.
OF COURSE I'M WORRIED. WE'RE FAMILY!
IS THAT ALL?

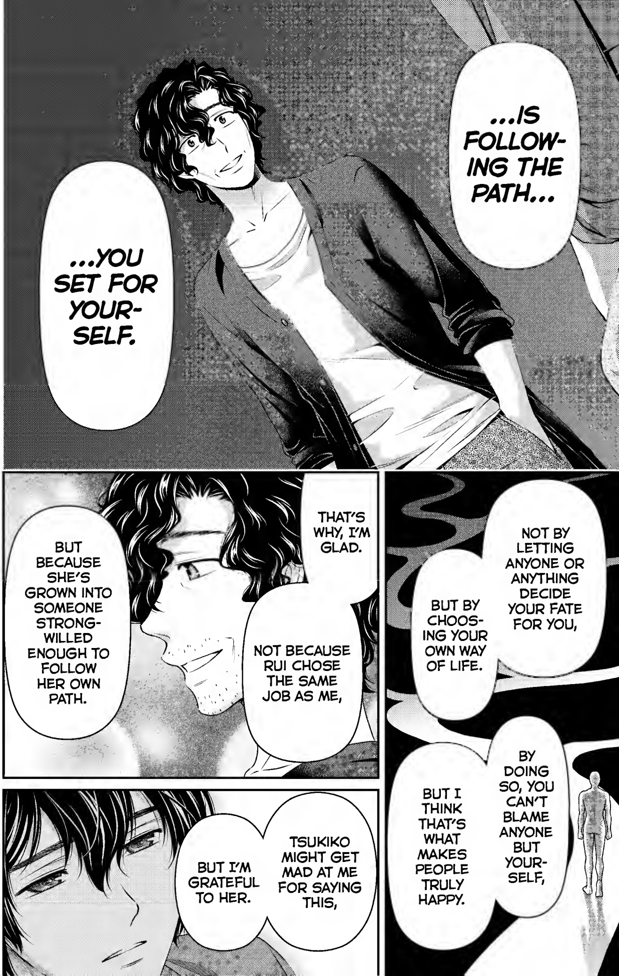

DO-
DON'T MAKE ME SAY IT...
HUG
ぎゅっ
YOUR EARS ARE BRIGHT RED.
I KNOW IT WAS MY DECISION TO COME HERE,
BUT I REALIZED HOW LONELY I WAS...
WHEN I COOKED AND ATE ALL BY MYSELF.
WHEN IT WAS JUST HINA-NEE, MOM, AND ME,
I ENDED UP EATING ALONE A LOT SINCE THEY HAD TO WORK LATE, AND IT NEVER REALLY BOTHERED ME.
BUT AFTER MOVING IN WITH YOU AND YOUR DAD,
EATING WITH COMPANY BECAME A REGULAR THING.
IT FEELS LIKE EVER SINCE I MET YOU...
...I'VE BEEN EXPERIENCING ALL SORTS OF FEELINGS FOR THE FIRST TIME.
ME, TOO.
WHEN I WAS EATING DINNER ALONE TODAY,
I FELT REALLY–
CLACK
RUIII! HOW 'BOUT A LATE-NIGHT SNACK?

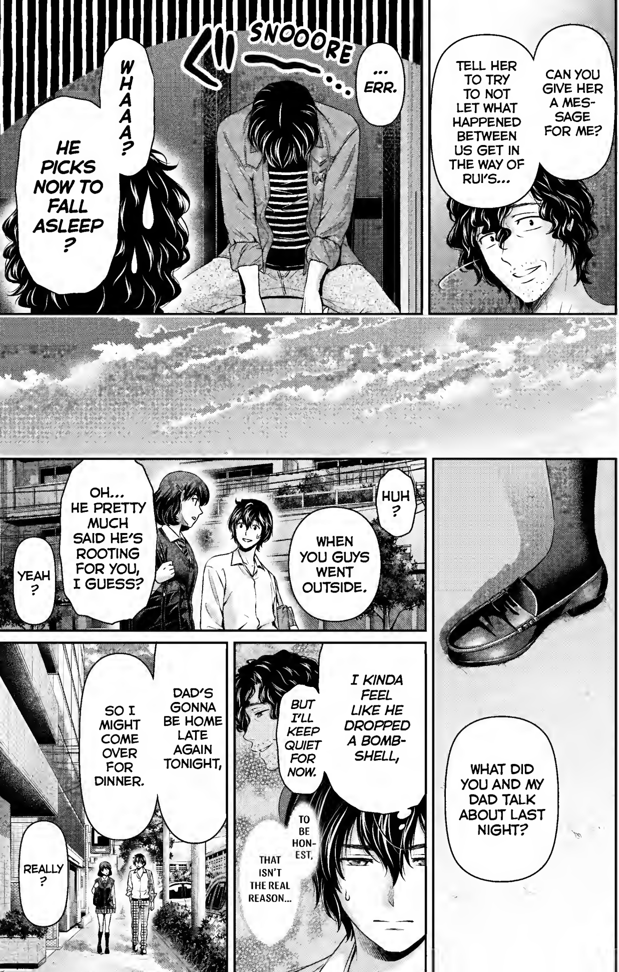

OHH?
SORRY TO INTERRUPT!
PLEASE, CONTINUE!
WAIT, WAIT, WAIT!
I'M RUI'S STEP-BROTHER...
THE LIGHT SWITCH IS OVER HERE, OKAY?
THIS ROOM GETS INDIRECT LIGHT, SO...
WOULD YOU PLEASE LISTEN TO ME?!
GOTCHA. SO, YOU'RE THE SON OF TSUKIKO'S NEW HUS-BAND.
I HONESTLY THOUGHT RUI BROUGHT HER BOYFRIEND OVER!
I WAS LIKE, "NOT BAD, KIDDO."
PLEASE...
WELL,
YES AND NO.
HEY.
ARE YOU HERE TO BRING RUI BACK HOME?
NO...
I JUST CAME TO CHECK ON HER.

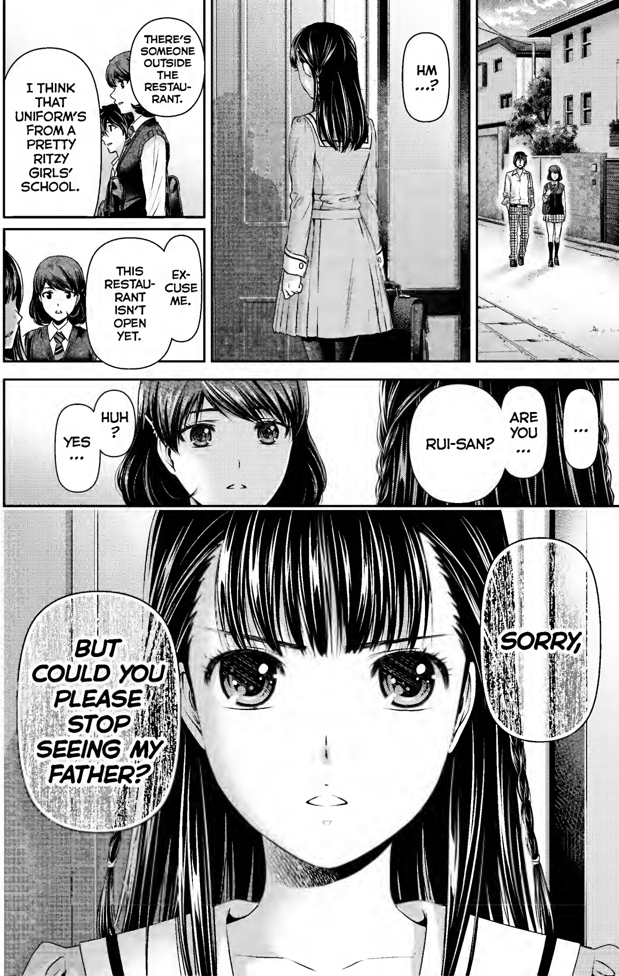

I KNOW SHE'S NOT GOING TO CHANGE HER MIND,
AND SHE SAID SHE WON'T GO HOME UNTIL HER MOM GIVES IN, SO...
HMM...
GOTCHA! WELL, FEEL FREE TO USE THE PLACE AT NIGHT!
I BOUGHT SOME GOOD CHEESE TODAY.
LET'S HAVE A TOAST TO OUR MEETING, NATSUO-KUN!
UM, BUT I'M MINOR...
NO SWEAT.
IT'S JUST JUICE!
PFFT
JUICE-LIKE WINE, THAT IS!
COUGH COUGH
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, DAD?!
AW, C'MON. IT'S JUST FRUIT WINE.
THIS ISN'T ITALY!
SLUMP
PLUS, NATSUO'S A SUPER LIGHT-WEIGHT...
UGH... YOU SEE?!
NO WAY!
YOU WEREN'T KIDDING!


HOW'RE YOU FEELING?
DID THE NIGHT BREEZE SOBER YOU UP?
SORRY ABOUT THAT!
I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D HAVE NO TOLERANCE WHATSOEVER.
IS YOUR DAD A LIGHTWEIGHT, TOO?
YEAH...
HE DRINKS, BUT IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH TO GET HIM DRUNK.
MUST BE ROUGH DRINKING WITH TSUKIKO, THEN.
THAT GAL CAN THROW 'EM BACK.
TSUKIKO-SAN REALLY SEEMS TO HATE YOUR GUTS...
SO MUCH THAT SHE'D OPPOSE HER OWN DAUGHTER'S DREAM UNTIL SHE RAN AWAY...

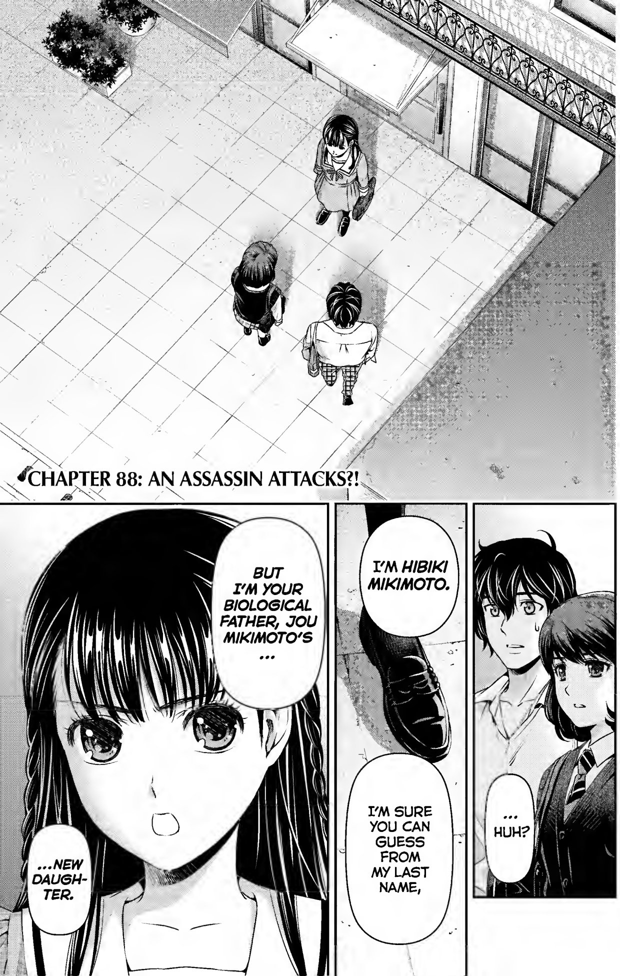

WELL,
I CAN’T SAY I’M SURPRISED, GIVEN HOW WE SPLIT UP.
NO HELPING THAT.
YOU HAD AN AFFAIR?
THAT’S THE STORY, ANYWAY.
STORY?
TO BE HONEST,
THAT ISN’T THE REAL REASON...
HUH...?
BUT, WELL,
IF YOU CAVE IN AFTER YOUR PARENTS OBJECT, YOU CAN’T REALLY CALL IT A DREAM.
SAY, NATSUO-KUN.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT MAKES PEOPLE HAPPIEST?
HAPPIEST?
UMM. I THINK THAT DEPENDS ON THE PERSON, BUT...
...REACHING YOUR GOALS OR MAKING YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE, I GUESS?
YEAH, THAT’S PRETTY MUCH WHAT IT COMES DOWN TO,
BUT AT THE ROOT OF THAT,
THE KEY TO A HAPPY LIFE...

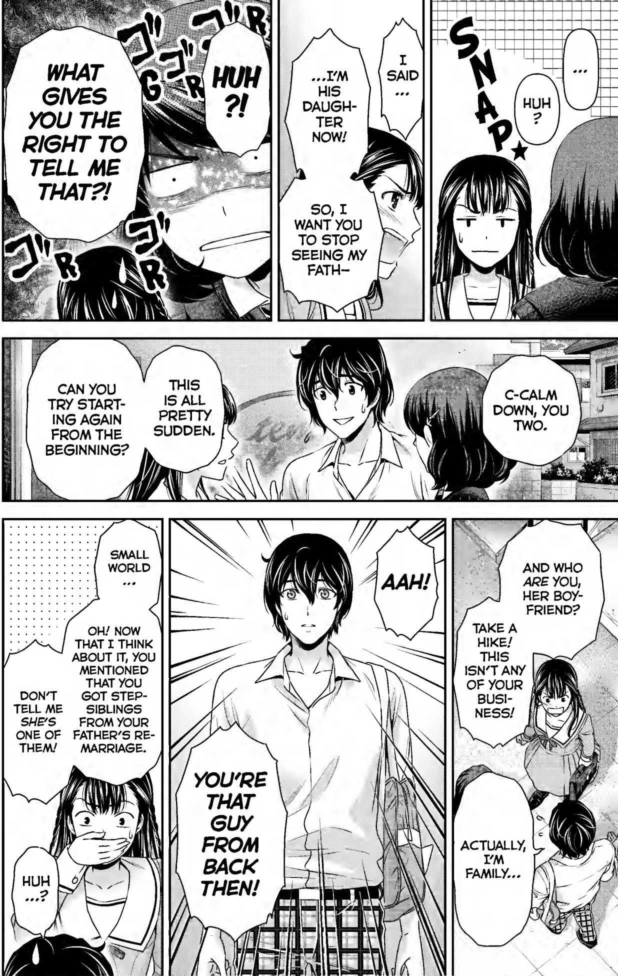

...IS FOLLOWING THE PATH...
...YOU SET FOR YOURSELF.
NOT BY LETTING ANYONE OR ANYTHING DECIDE YOUR FATE FOR YOU,
BUT BY CHOOSING YOUR OWN WAY OF LIFE.
BY DOING SO, YOU CAN'T BLAME ANYONE BUT YOURSELF,
BUT I THINK THAT'S WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TRULY HAPPY.
THAT'S WHY, I'M GLAD.
NOT BECAUSE RUI CHOSE THE SAME JOB AS ME,
BUT BECAUSE SHE'S GROWN INTO SOMEONE STRONG-WILLED ENOUGH TO FOLLOW HER OWN PATH.
TSUKIKO MIGHT GET MAD AT ME FOR SAYING THIS,
BUT I'M GRATEFUL TO HER.

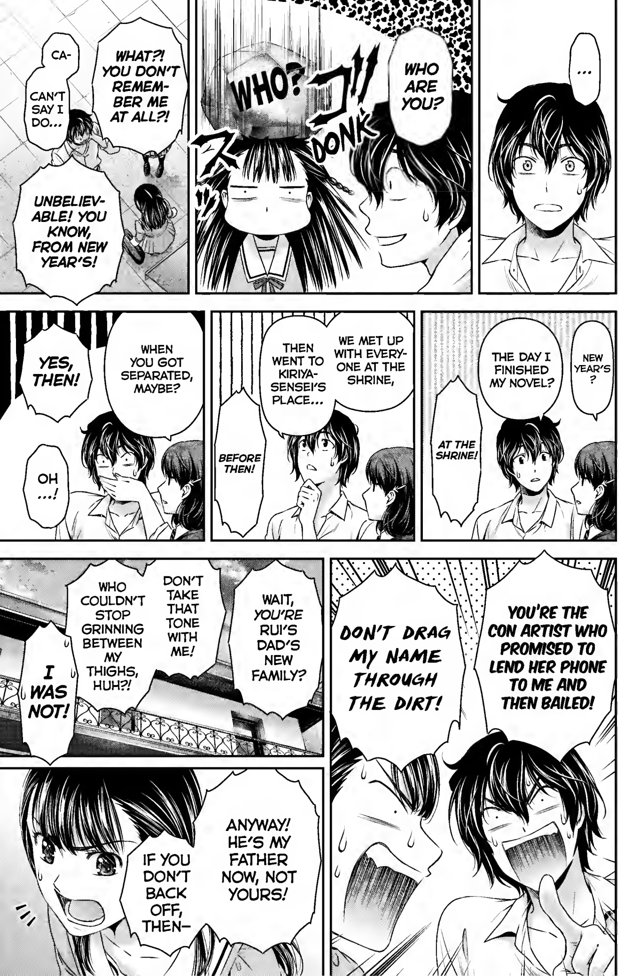

CAN YOU GIVE HER A MESSAGE FOR ME?
TELL HER TO TRY TO NOT LET WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN US GET IN THE WAY OF RUI'S...
... ERR.
SNOOORE
WHAAAA?
HE PICKS NOW TO FALL ASLEEP?
WHAT DID YOU AND MY DAD TALK ABOUT LAST NIGHT?
HUH?
WHEN YOU GUYS WENT OUTSIDE.
OH... HE PRETTY MUCH SAID HE'S ROOTING FOR YOU, I GUESS?
YEAH?
I KINDA FEEL LIKE HE DROPPED A BOMBSHELL,
BUT I'LL KEEP QUIET FOR NOW.
TO BE HONEST,
THAT ISN'T THE REAL REASON...
DAD'S GONNA BE HOME LATE AGAIN TONIGHT,
SO I MIGHT COME OVER FOR DINNER.
REALLY?

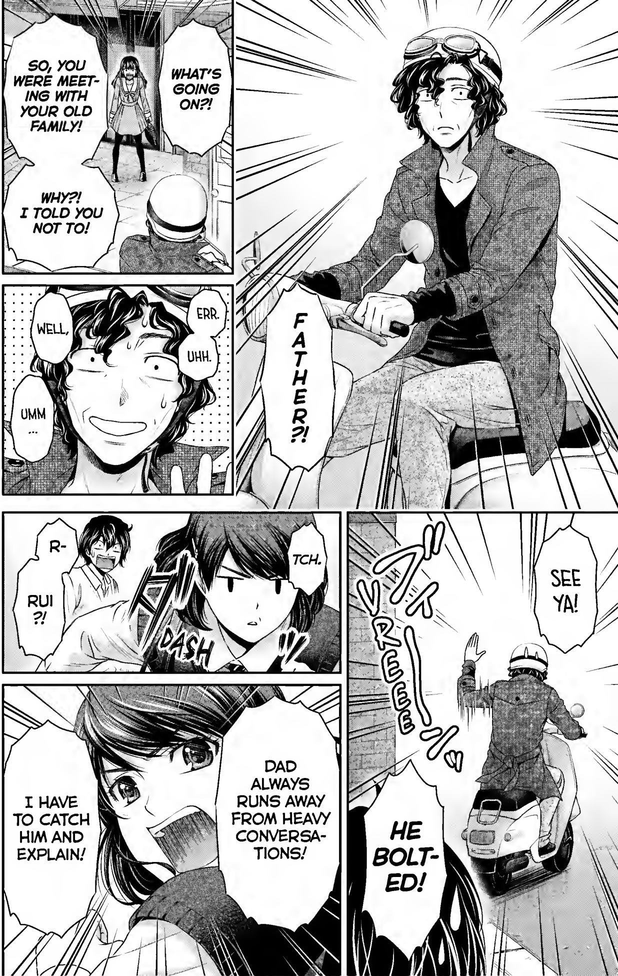

HM ...?
THERE'S SOMEONE OUTSIDE THE RESTAURANT.
I THINK THAT UNIFORM'S FROM A PRETTY RITZY GIRLS' SCHOOL.
EXCUSE ME.
THIS RESTAURANT ISN'T OPEN YET.
...
ARE YOU ...
RUI-SAN?
HUH ?
YES ...
SORRY,
BUT COULD YOU PLEASE STOP SEEING MY FATHER?

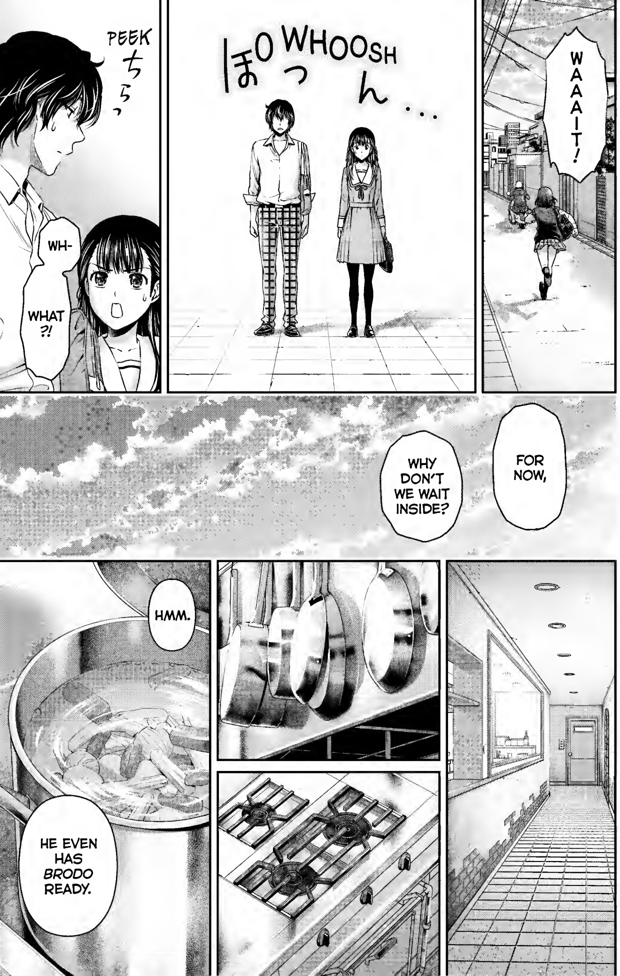
CHAPTER 88: AN ASSASSIN ATTACKS?!

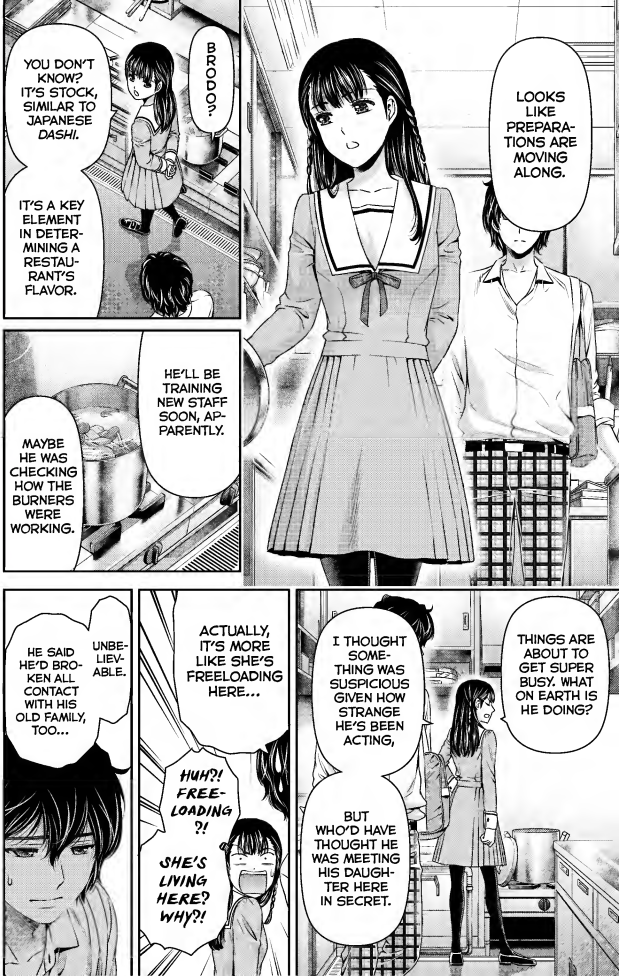

... HUH?
I'M HIBIKI MIKIMOTO.
I'M SURE YOU CAN GUESS FROM MY LAST NAME,
BUT I'M YOUR BIOLOGICAL FATHER, JOU MIKIMOTO'S ...
...NEW DAUGHTER.

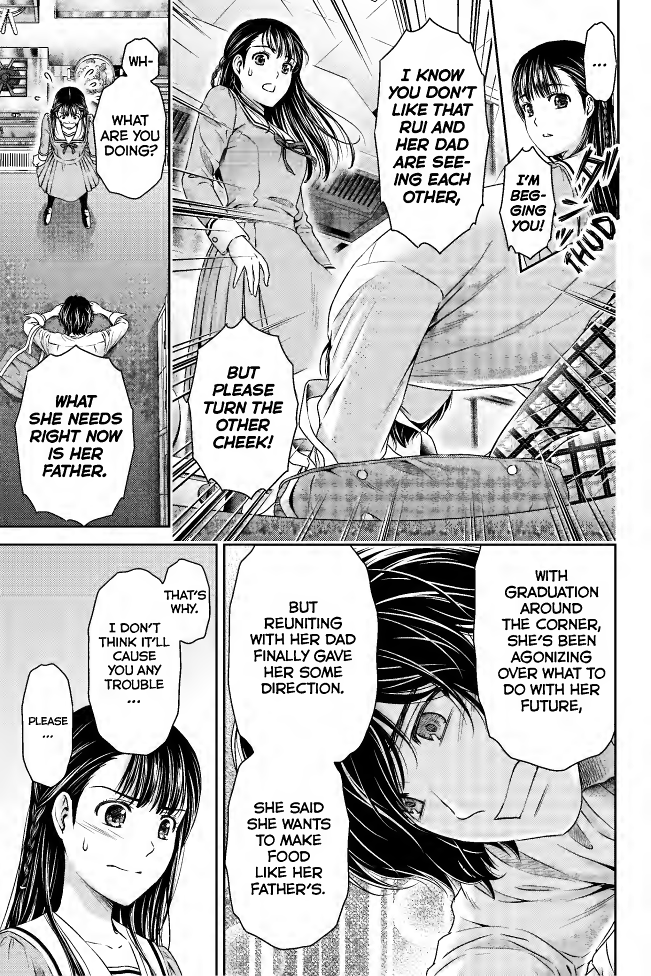

...
HUH?
SNAP★
I SAID...
...I'M HIS DAUGHTER NOW!
SO, I WANT YOU TO STOP SEEING MY FATH–
ゴ" R
HUH?!
ゴ" G ゴ" R
WHAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO TELL ME THAT?!
ゴ" R
ゴ" R
C-CALM DOWN, YOU TWO.
THIS IS ALL PRETTY SUDDEN.
CAN YOU TRY STARTING AGAIN FROM THE BEGINNING?
AND WHO *ARE* YOU, HER BOYFRIEND?
TAKE A HIKE! THIS ISN'T ANY OF YOUR BUSINESS!
ACTUALLY, I'M FAMILY...
AAH!
YOU'RE THAT GUY FROM BACK THEN!
SMALL WORLD...
OH! NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, YOU MENTIONED THAT YOU GOT STEPSIBLINGS FROM YOUR FATHER'S REMARRIAGE.
DON'T TELL ME *SHE'S* ONE OF THEM!
HUH...?

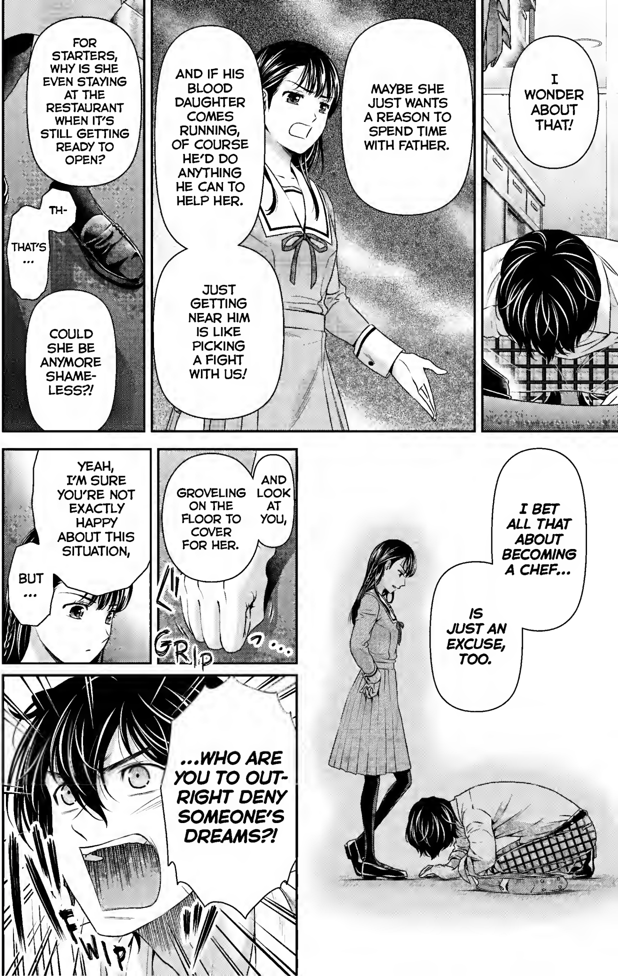

...
WHO ARE YOU?
WHO?
ゴ!!
DONK
ス
WHAT?! YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME AT ALL?!
CA-
CAN'T SAY I DO...
UNBELIEVABLE! YOU KNOW, FROM NEW YEAR'S!
NEW YEAR'S?
THE DAY I FINISHED MY NOVEL?
AT THE SHRINE!
WE MET UP WITH EVERYONE AT THE SHRINE,
THEN WENT TO KIRIYA-SENSEI'S PLACE...
BEFORE THEN!
WHEN YOU GOT SEPARATED, MAYBE?
YES, THEN!
OH ...!
YOU'RE THE CON ARTIST WHO PROMISED TO LEND HER PHONE TO ME AND THEN BAILED!
DON'T DRAG MY NAME THROUGH THE DIRT!
WAIT, YOU'RE RUI'S DAD'S NEW FAMILY?
DON'T TAKE THAT TONE WITH ME!
WHO COULDN'T STOP GRINNING BETWEEN MY THIGHS, HUH?!
I WAS NOT!
ANYWAY! HE'S MY FATHER NOW, NOT YOURS!
IF YOU DON'T BACK OFF, THEN–

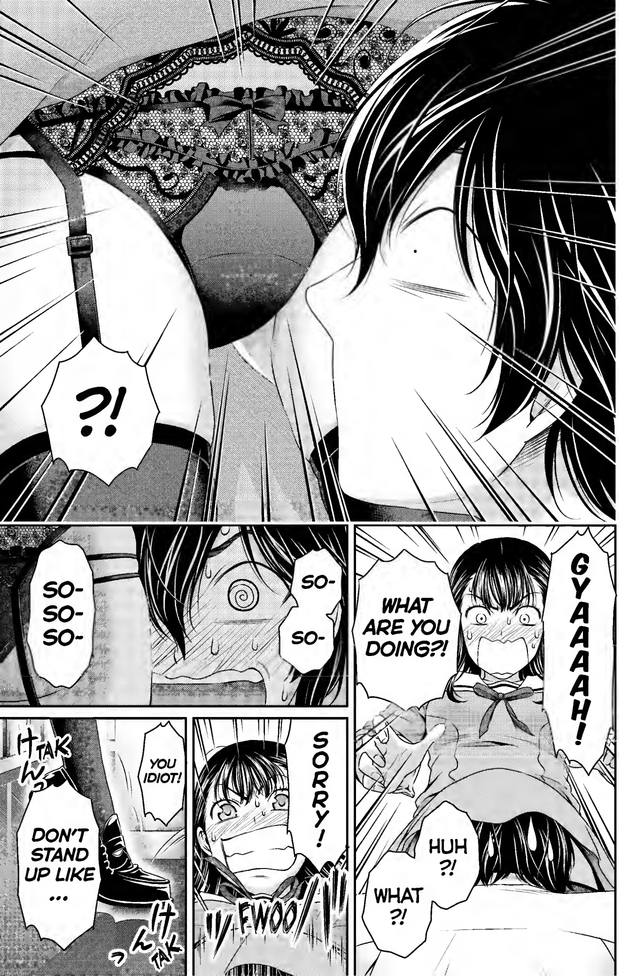

FATHER?!
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
SO, YOU WERE MEETING WITH YOUR OLD FAMILY!
WHY?! I TOLD YOU NOT TO!
ERR.
UHH.
WELL,
UMM ...
VREEE—
SEE YA!
HE BOLTED!
TCH.
DASH
R- RUI?!
DAD ALWAYS RUNS AWAY FROM HEAVY CONVERSATIONS!
I HAVE TO CATCH HIM AND EXPLAIN!

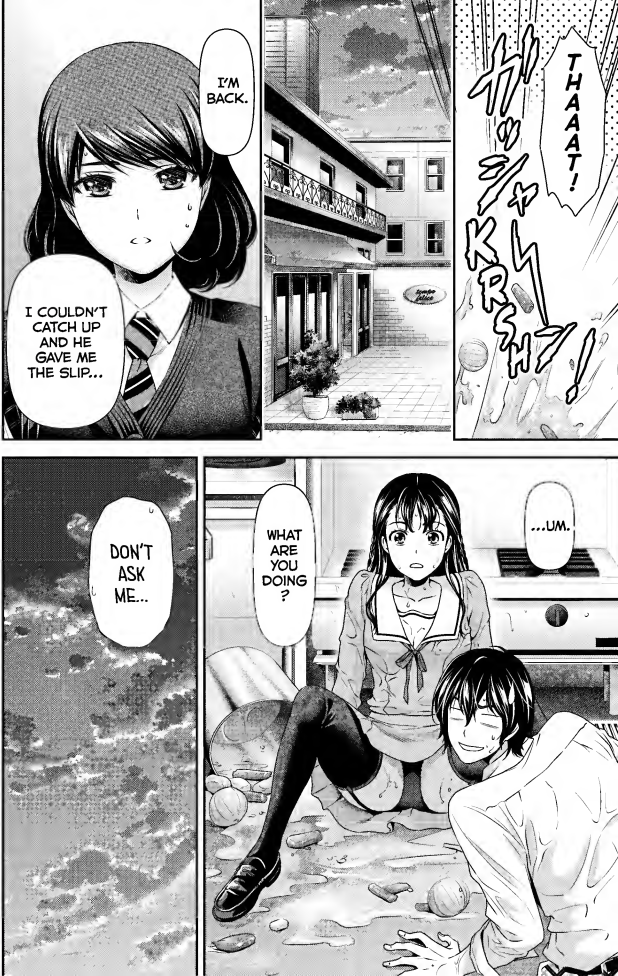

WAAAIT!
ぽつん WHOOSH ...
PEEK ちらっ
WH-
WHAT?!
FOR NOW,
WHY DON'T WE WAIT INSIDE?
HMM.
HE EVEN HAS *BRODO* READY.

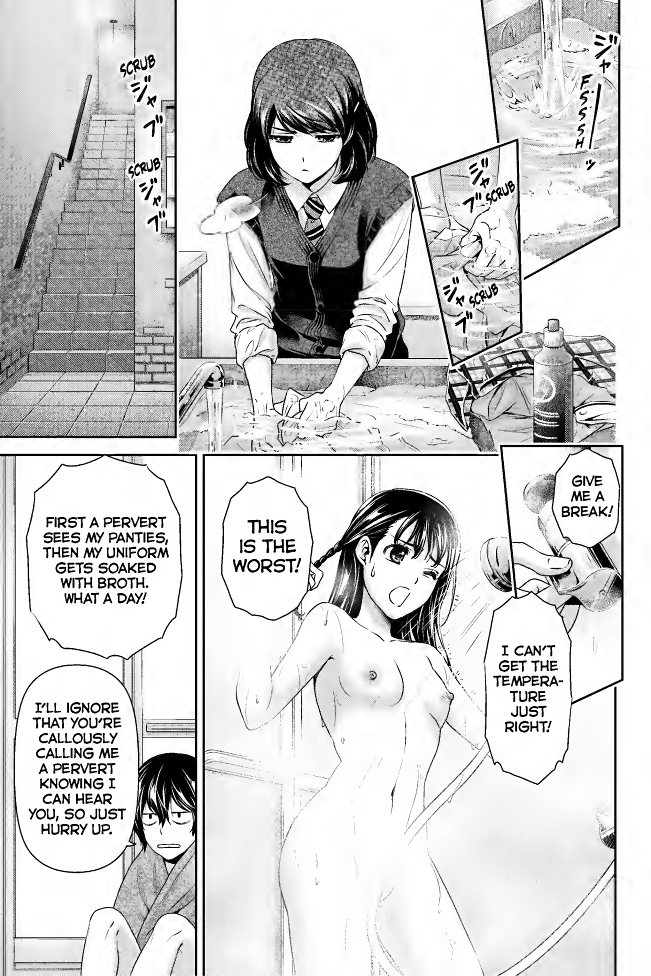

LOOKS LIKE PREPARATIONS ARE MOVING ALONG.
BRODO?
YOU DON'T KNOW? IT'S STOCK, SIMILAR TO JAPANESE *DASHI*.
IT'S A KEY ELEMENT IN DETERMINING A RESTAURANT'S FLAVOR.
HE'LL BE TRAINING NEW STAFF SOON, APPARENTLY.
MAYBE HE WAS CHECKING HOW THE BURNERS WERE WORKING.
THINGS ARE ABOUT TO GET SUPER BUSY. WHAT ON EARTH IS HE DOING?
I THOUGHT SOMETHING WAS SUSPICIOUS GIVEN HOW STRANGE HE'S BEEN ACTING,
BUT WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT HE WAS MEETING HIS DAUGHTER HERE IN SECRET.
ACTUALLY, IT'S MORE LIKE SHE'S FREELOADING HERE...
HUH?! FREELOADING?!
SHE'S LIVING HERE? WHY?!
UNBELIEVABLE.
HE SAID HE'D BROKEN ALL CONTACT WITH HIS OLD FAMILY, TOO...

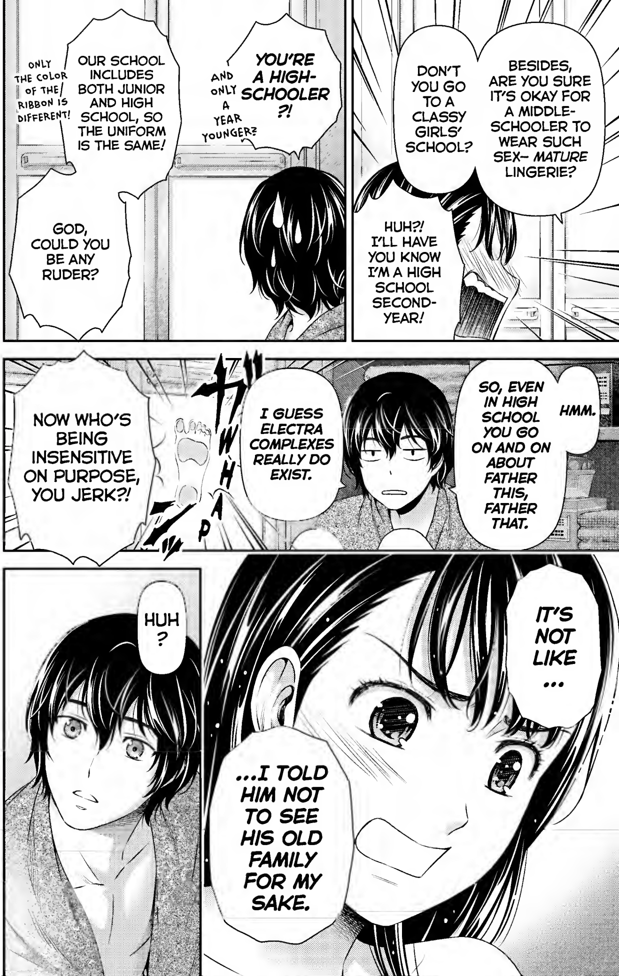

...
I'M BEGGING YOU!
THUD
I KNOW YOU DON'T LIKE THAT RUI AND HER DAD ARE SEEING EACH OTHER,
BUT PLEASE TURN THE OTHER CHEEK!
WH-
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WHAT SHE NEEDS RIGHT NOW IS HER FATHER.
WITH GRADUATION AROUND THE CORNER, SHE'S BEEN AGONIZING OVER WHAT TO DO WITH HER FUTURE,
BUT REUNITING WITH HER DAD FINALLY GAVE HER SOME DIRECTION.
SHE SAID SHE WANTS TO MAKE FOOD LIKE HER FATHER'S.
THAT'S WHY.
I DON'T THINK IT'LL CAUSE YOU ANY TROUBLE ...
PLEASE ...

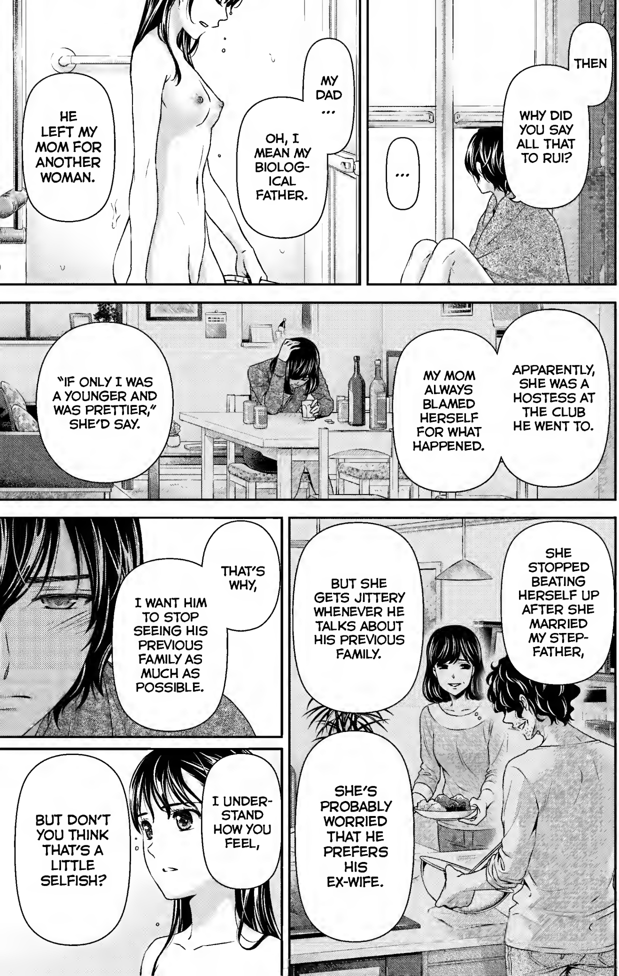

I WONDER ABOUT THAT!
MAYBE SHE JUST WANTS A REASON TO SPEND TIME WITH FATHER.
AND IF HIS BLOOD DAUGHTER COMES RUNNING, OF COURSE HE'D DO ANYTHING HE CAN TO HELP HER.
JUST GETTING NEAR HIM IS LIKE PICKING A FIGHT WITH US!
FOR STARTERS, WHY IS SHE EVEN STAYING AT THE RESTAURANT WHEN IT'S STILL GETTING READY TO OPEN?
TH-
THAT'S...
COULD SHE BE ANYMORE SHAMELESS?!
I BET ALL THAT ABOUT BECOMING A CHEF...
IS JUST AN EXCUSE, TOO.
AND LOOK AT YOU,
GROVELING ON THE FLOOR TO COVER FOR HER.
GRIP...
YEAH, I'M SURE YOU'RE NOT EXACTLY HAPPY ABOUT THIS SITUATION,
BUT...
...WHO ARE YOU TO OUT-RIGHT DENY SOMEONE'S DREAMS?!
FWIP

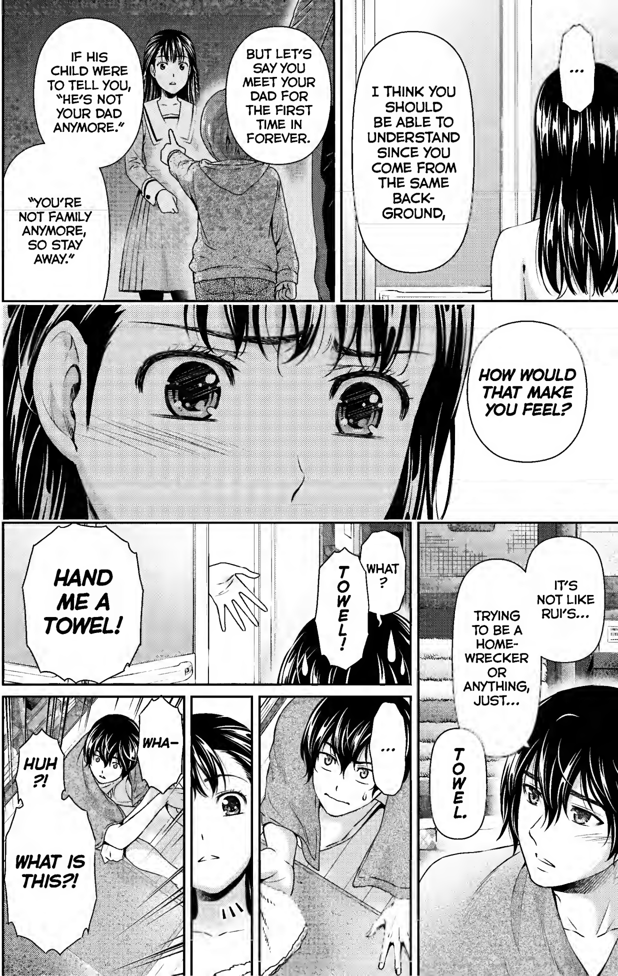

?!
GYAAAAH!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
HUH ?!
WHAT ?!
SO- SO-
SO- SO- SO-
SORRY!
YOU IDIOT!
FWOO
けんっ TAK
DON'T STAND UP LIKE ...
けんっ TAK

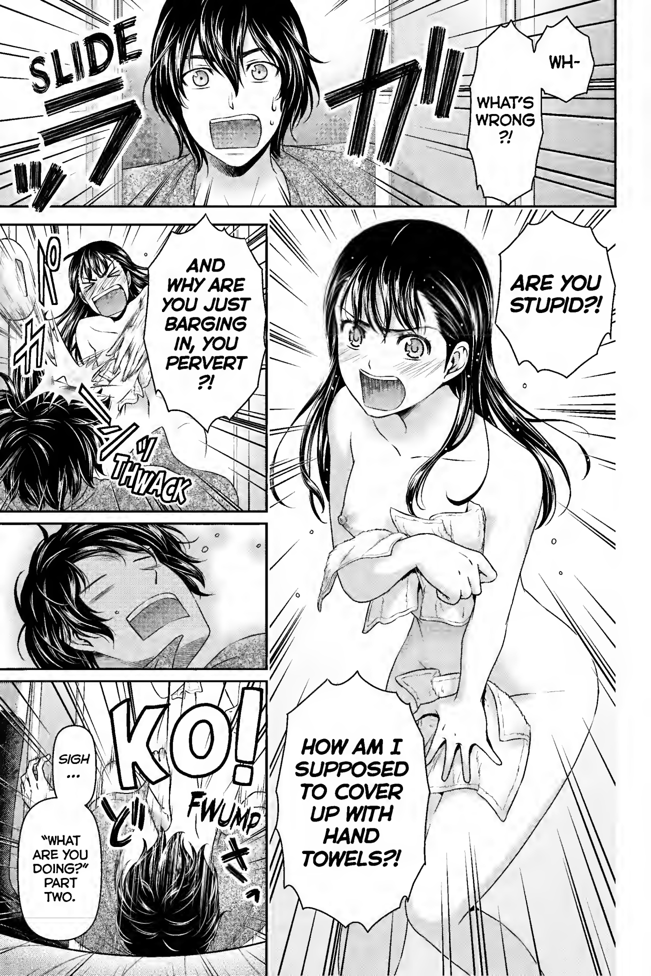

THAAAT!
ガッシャン！
KRSH
tempo felice
I'M BACK.
I COULDN'T CATCH UP AND HE GAVE ME THE SLIP...
...UM.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
DON'T ASK ME...

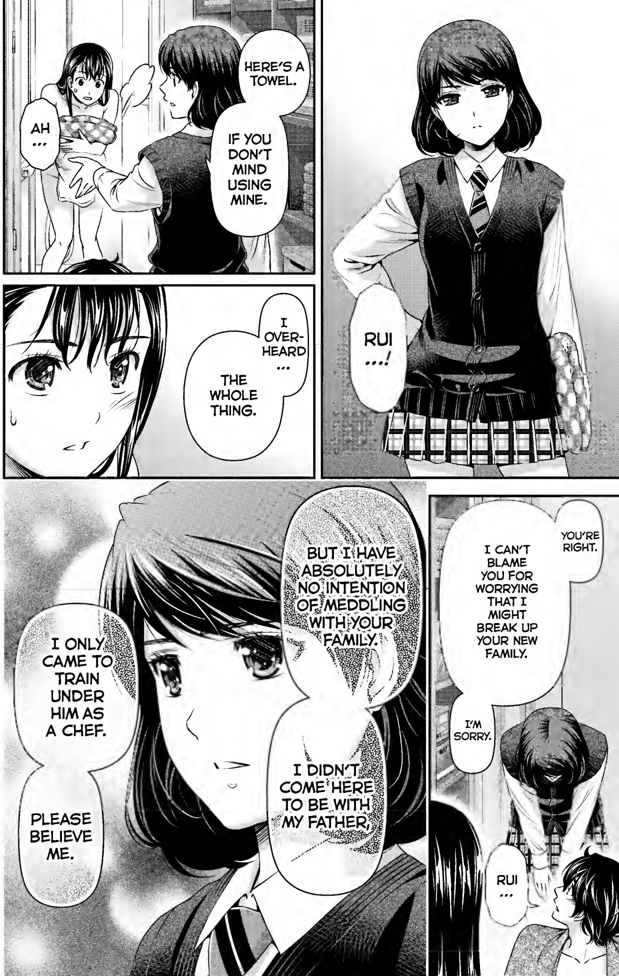

ジャ
FSSSH
ッ
ジャブ SCRUB
ジャブ SCRUB
SCRUB
ジャブ
SCRUB
ジャブ
GIVE ME A BREAK!
I CAN'T GET THE TEMPERATURE JUST RIGHT!
THIS IS THE WORST!
FIRST A PERVERT SEES MY PANTIES, THEN MY UNIFORM GETS SOAKED WITH BROTH. WHAT A DAY!
I'LL IGNORE THAT YOU'RE CALLOUSLY CALLING ME A PERVERT KNOWING I CAN HEAR YOU, SO JUST HURRY UP.

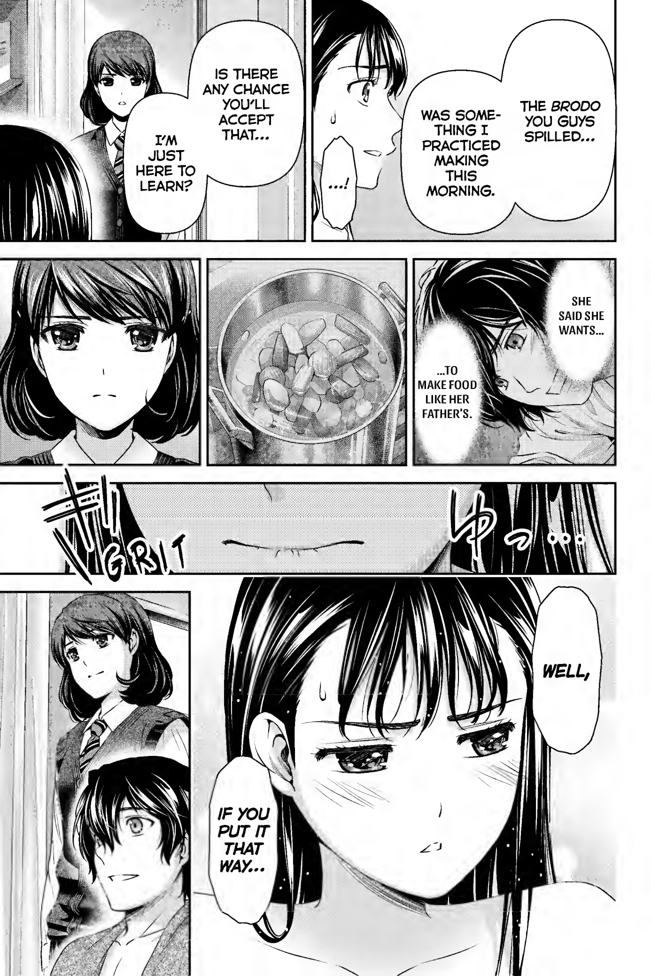

BESIDES, ARE YOU SURE IT'S OKAY FOR A MIDDLE-SCHOOLER TO WEAR SUCH SEX– *MATURE* LINGERIE?
DON'T YOU GO TO A CLASSY GIRLS' SCHOOL?
HUH?! I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW I'M A HIGH SCHOOL SECOND-YEAR!
YOU'RE A HIGH-SCHOOLER?!
AND ONLY A YEAR YOUNGER?
OUR SCHOOL INCLUDES BOTH JUNIOR AND HIGH SCHOOL, SO THE UNIFORM IS THE SAME!
ONLY THE COLOR OF THE RIBBON IS DIFFERENT!
GOD, COULD YOU BE ANY RUDER?
HMM.
SO, EVEN IN HIGH SCHOOL YOU GO ON AND ON ABOUT FATHER THIS, FATHER THAT.
I GUESS ELECTRA COMPLEXES REALLY DO EXIST.
WHAP
NOW WHO'S BEING INSENSITIVE ON PURPOSE, YOU JERK?!
IT'S NOT LIKE...
...I TOLD HIM NOT TO SEE HIS OLD FAMILY FOR MY SAKE.
HUH?

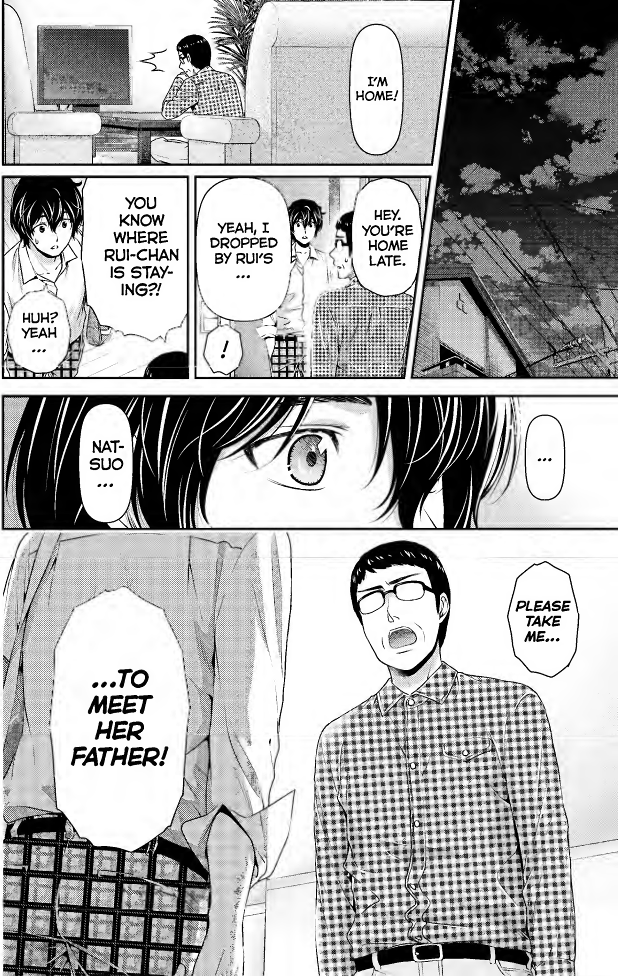

THEN
WHY DID YOU SAY ALL THAT TO RUI?
...
MY DAD ...
OH, I MEAN MY BIOLOGICAL FATHER.
HE LEFT MY MOM FOR ANOTHER WOMAN.
APPARENTLY, SHE WAS A HOSTESS AT THE CLUB HE WENT TO.
MY MOM ALWAYS BLAMED HERSELF FOR WHAT HAPPENED.
"IF ONLY I WAS A YOUNGER AND WAS PRETTIER," SHE'D SAY.
SHE STOPPED BEATING HERSELF UP AFTER SHE MARRIED MY STEPFATHER,
BUT SHE GETS JITTERY WHENEVER HE TALKS ABOUT HIS PREVIOUS FAMILY.
SHE'S PROBABLY WORRIED THAT HE PREFERS HIS EX-WIFE.
THAT'S WHY,
I WANT HIM TO STOP SEEING HIS PREVIOUS FAMILY AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.
I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL,
BUT DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S A LITTLE SELFISH?


...
I THINK YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND SINCE YOU COME FROM THE SAME BACKGROUND,
BUT LET'S SAY YOU MEET YOUR DAD FOR THE FIRST TIME IN FOREVER.
IF HIS CHILD WERE TO TELL YOU, "HE'S NOT YOUR DAD ANYMORE."
"YOU'RE NOT FAMILY ANYMORE, SO STAY AWAY."
HOW WOULD THAT MAKE YOU FEEL?
IT'S NOT LIKE RUI'S...
TRYING TO BE A HOMEWRECKER OR ANYTHING, JUST...
TOWEL.
WHAT?
TOWEL!
HAND ME A TOWEL!
...
WHA-
HUH?!
WHAT IS THIS?!

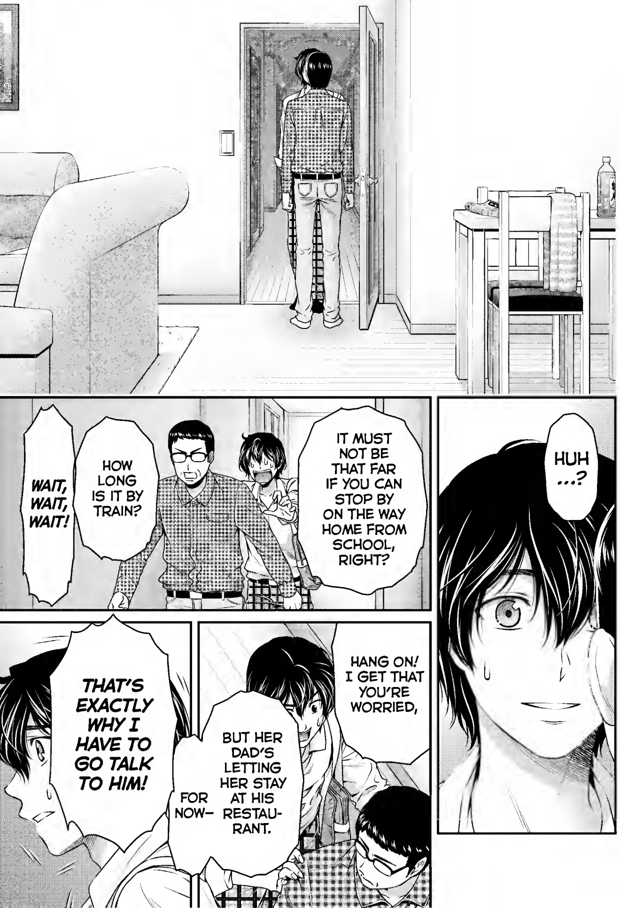

SLIDE
WH-
WHAT'S WRONG ?!
ARE YOU STUPID?!
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO COVER UP WITH HAND TOWELS?!
AND WHY ARE YOU JUST BARGING IN, YOU PERVERT ?!
THWACK
KO!
FWUMP
SIGH ...
"WHAT ARE YOU DOING?" PART TWO.

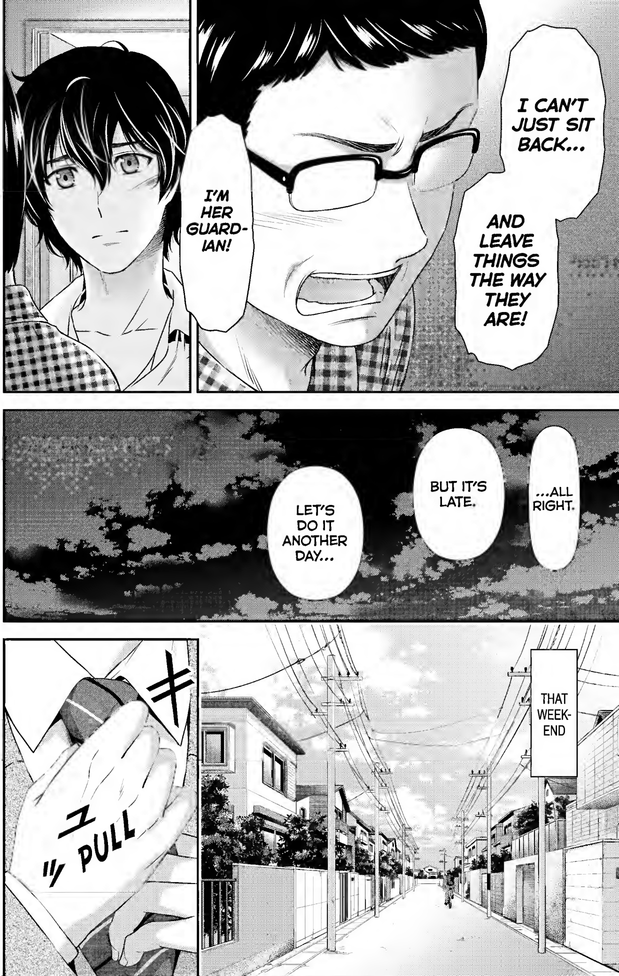

RUI ...!
HERE'S A TOWEL.
IF YOU DON'T MIND USING MINE.
AH ...
I OVERHEARD ...
THE WHOLE THING.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I CAN'T BLAME YOU FOR WORRYING THAT I MIGHT BREAK UP YOUR NEW FAMILY.
I'M SORRY.
RUI ...
BUT I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO INTENTION OF MEDDLING WITH YOUR FAMILY.
I DIDN'T COME HERE TO BE WITH MY FATHER,
I ONLY CAME TO TRAIN UNDER HIM AS A CHEF.
PLEASE BELIEVE ME.

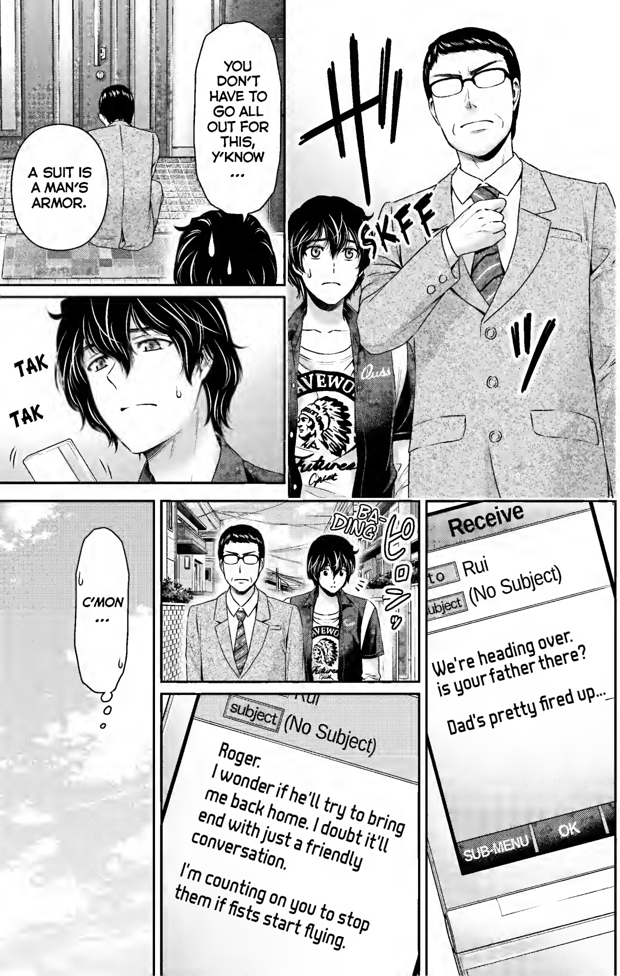

THE *BRODO* YOU GUYS SPILLED...
WAS SOMETHING I PRACTICED MAKING THIS MORNING.
...!
IS THERE ANY CHANCE YOU'LL ACCEPT THAT...
I'M JUST HERE TO LEARN?
SHE SAID SHE WANTS...
...TO MAKE FOOD LIKE HER FATHER'S.
ゆっ...
GRIT
WELL,
IF YOU PUT IT THAT WAY...


I'M HOME!
HEY. YOU'RE HOME LATE.
YEAH, I DROPPED BY RUI'S ...
!
YOU KNOW WHERE RUI-CHAN IS STAYING?!
HUH? YEAH ...
...
NATSUO ...
PLEASE TAKE ME...
...TO MEET HER FATHER!

CHAPTER 89: AS A FATHER…


HUH …?
IT MUST NOT BE THAT FAR IF YOU CAN STOP BY ON THE WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL, RIGHT?
HOW LONG IS IT BY TRAIN?
WAIT, WAIT, WAIT!
HANG ON! I GET THAT YOU'RE WORRIED,
BUT HER DAD'S LETTING HER STAY AT HIS RESTAURANT.
FOR NOW—
THAT'S EXACTLY WHY I HAVE TO GO TALK TO HIM!


I CAN'T JUST SIT BACK...
AND LEAVE THINGS THE WAY THEY ARE!
I'M HER GUARDIAN!
...ALL RIGHT.
BUT IT'S LATE.
LET'S DO IT ANOTHER DAY...
THAT WEEKEND
PULL


SKFF
YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO ALL OUT FOR THIS, Y'KNOW ...
A SUIT IS A MAN'S ARMOR.
TAK
TAK
Receive
BA-DING
ピロロンッ
SUB-MENU
OK
C'MON ...

to Rui
subject (No Subject)

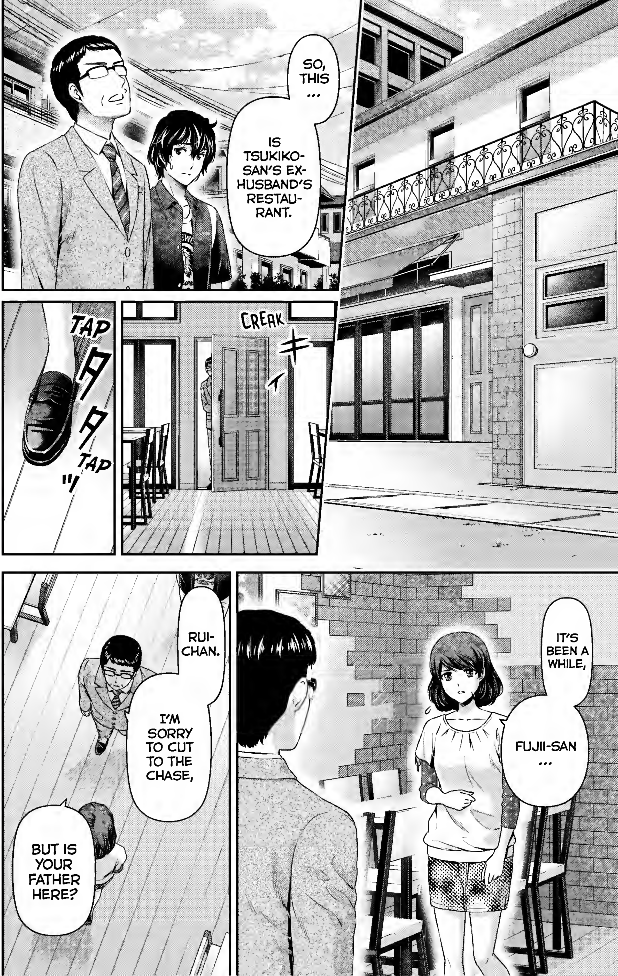
We're heading over.
is your father there?

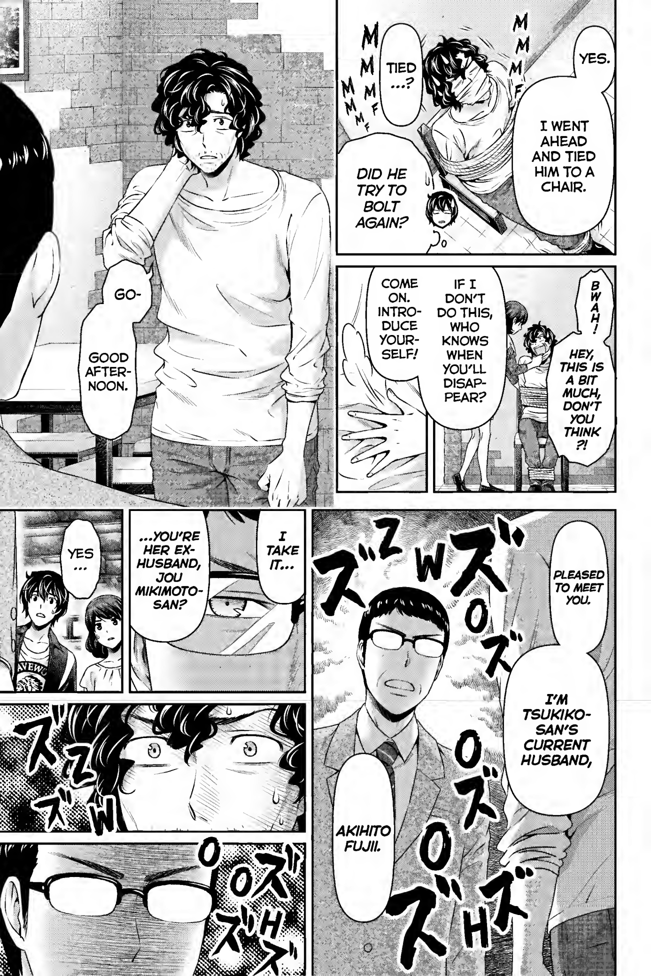
Dad's pretty fired up...

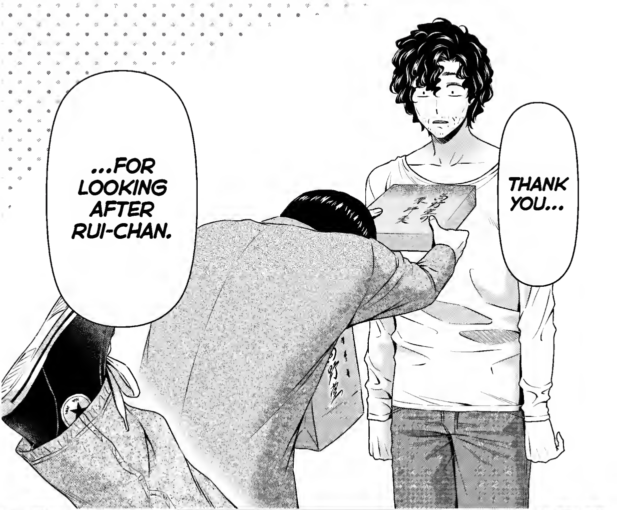
subject (No Subject)

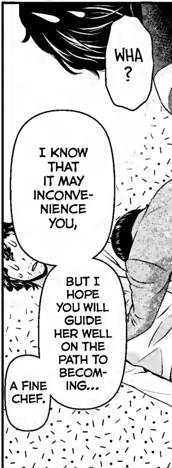
Roger.
I wonder if he'll try to bring me back home. I doubt it'll end with just a friendly conversation.

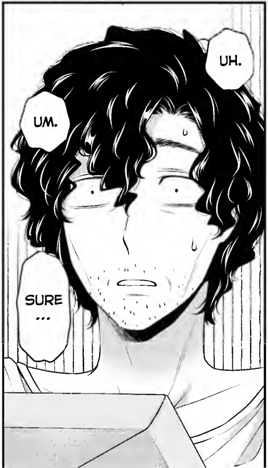
I'm counting on you to stop them if fists start flying.

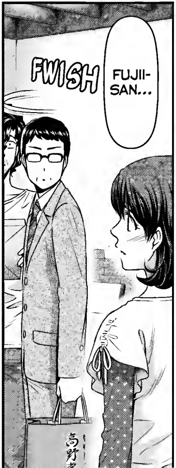

SO, THIS...
IS TSUKIKO-SAN'S EX-HUSBAND'S RESTAURANT.
CREAK
キイ
TAP
タタッ
TAP
IT'S BEEN A WHILE,
FUJII-SAN...
RUI-CHAN.
I'M SORRY TO CUT TO THE CHASE,
BUT IS YOUR FATHER HERE?

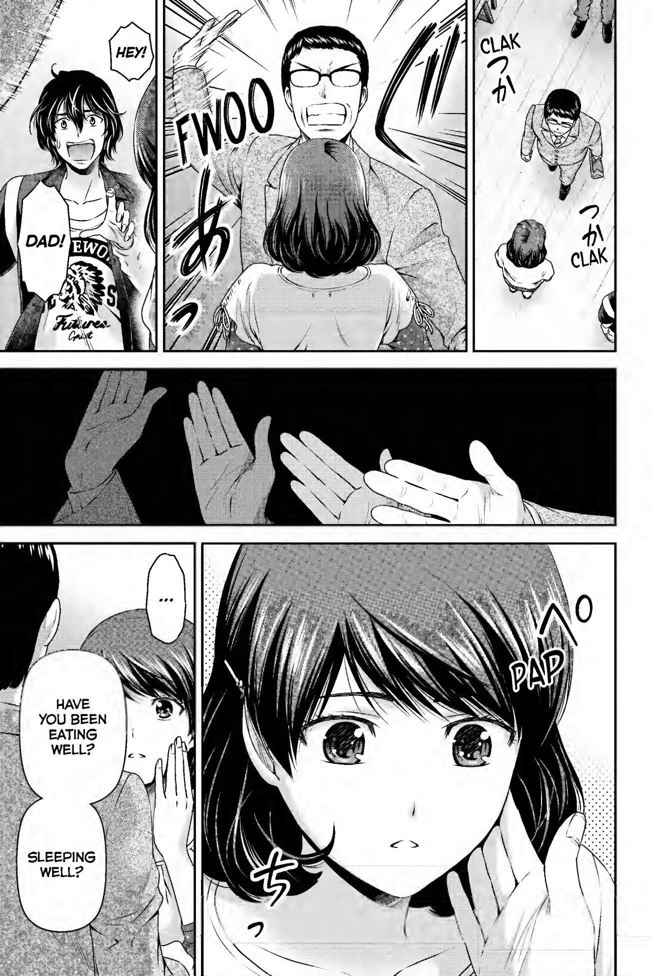

YES.
I WENT AHEAD AND TIED HIM TO A CHAIR.
MMMF
TIED ...?
MMMMMF
DID HE TRY TO BOLT AGAIN?
BWAH!
HEY, THIS IS A BIT MUCH, DON'T YOU THINK?!
IF I DON'T DO THIS, WHO KNOWS WHEN YOU'LL DISAPPEAR?
COME ON. INTRODUCE YOURSELF!
GO-
GOOD AFTERNOON.
I TAKE IT...
...YOU'RE HER EX-HUSBAND, JOU MIKIMOTO-SAN?
YES ...
ズ Z W ズ O ズ O ズ O ズ H ズ
PLEASED TO MEET YOU.
I'M TSUKIKO-SAN'S CURRENT HUSBAND,
AKIHITO FUJII.
ズ Z ズ W
O O ズ ズ H ズ

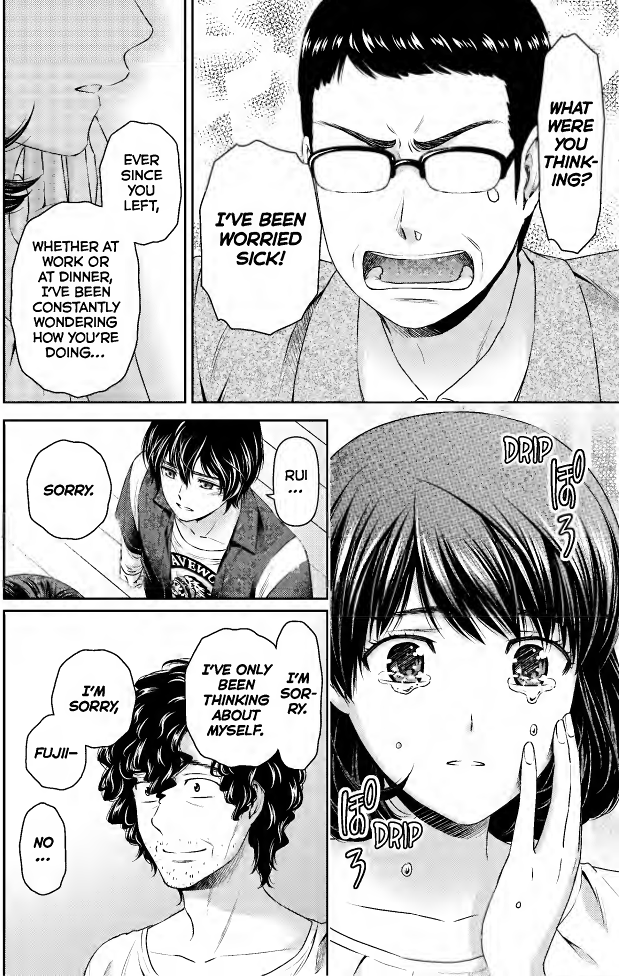

THANK YOU...
...FOR LOOKING AFTER RUI-CHAN.

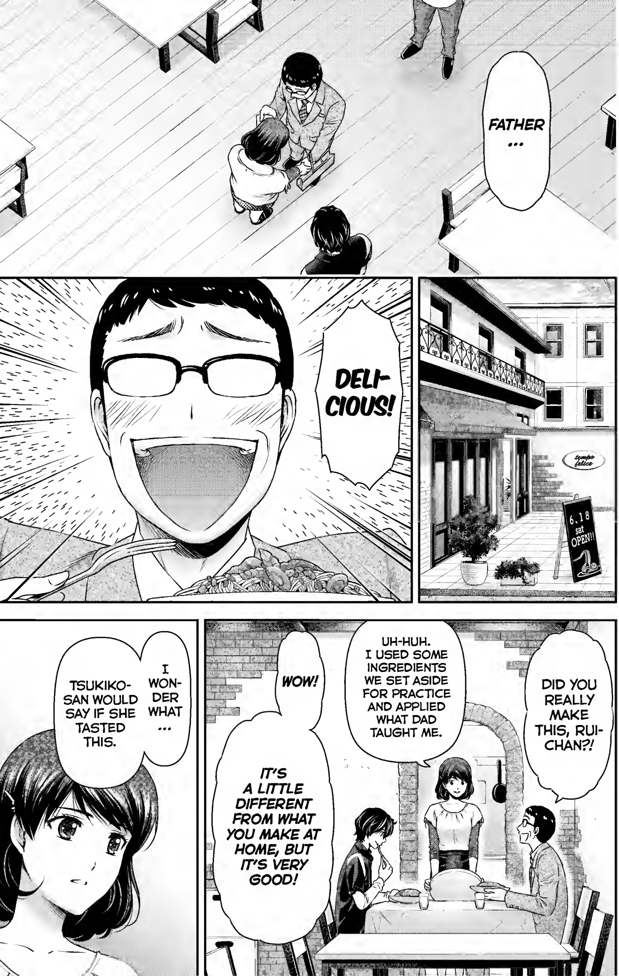

WHA ?
I KNOW THAT IT MAY INCONVENIENCE YOU,
BUT I HOPE YOU WILL GUIDE HER WELL ON THE PATH TO BECOMING...
A FINE CHEF.

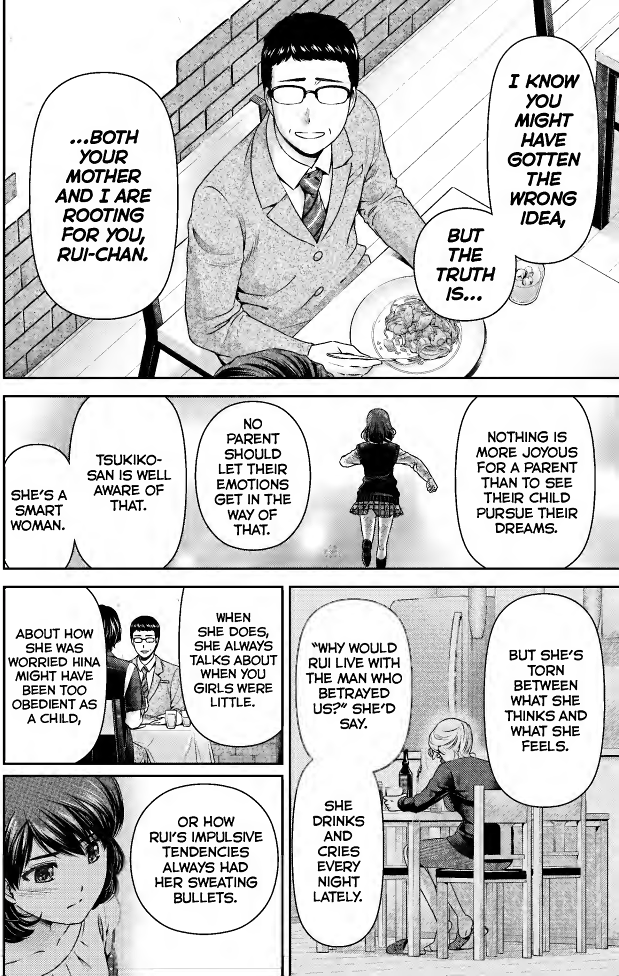

UH.
UM.
SURE ...

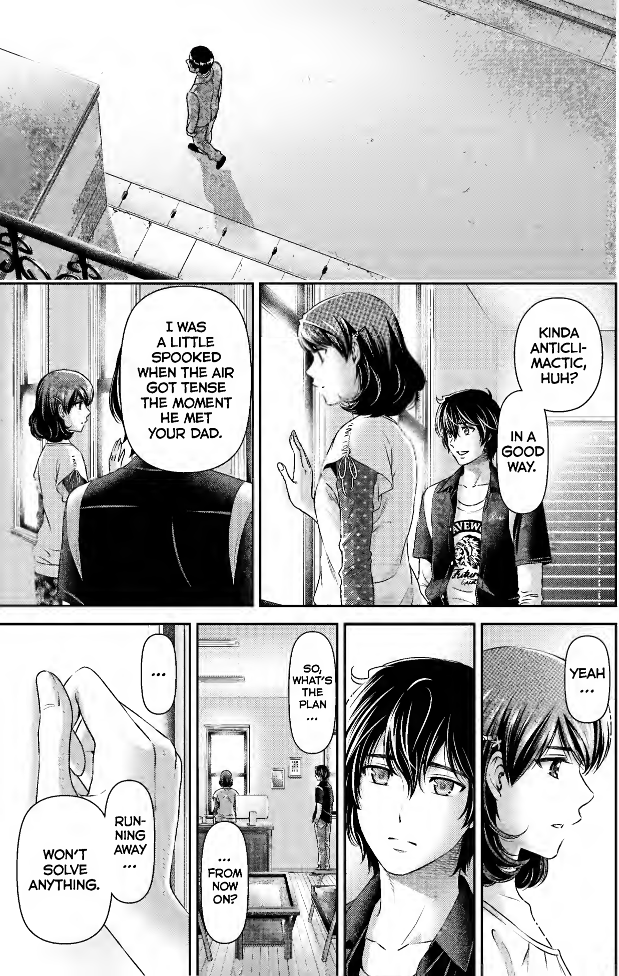

FUJII-SAN...
FWISH

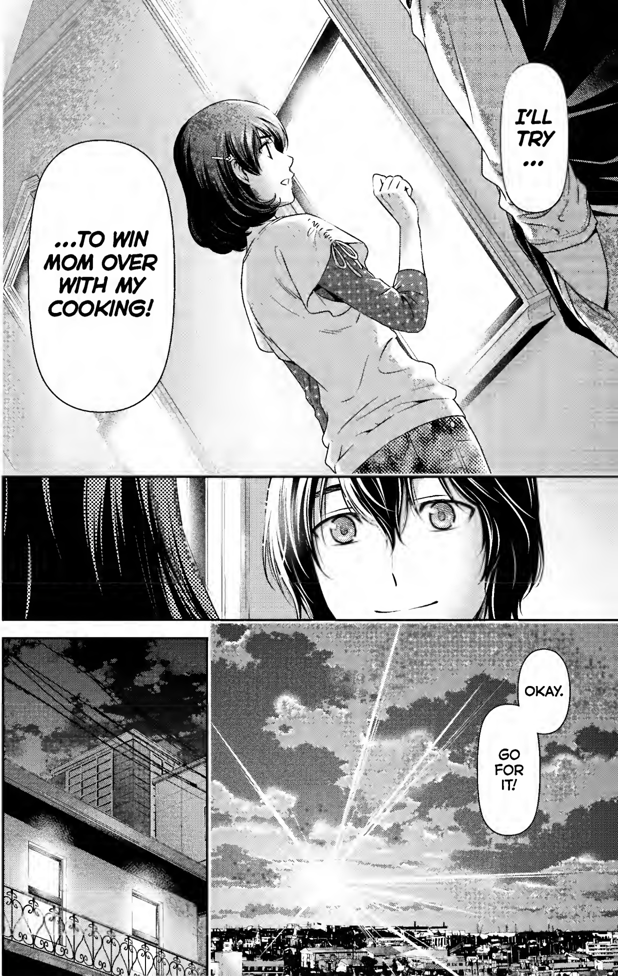

CLAK
つか
つか
CLAK
FWOO
あっ
HEY!
DAD!
ぺ
PAP
ちっ
...
HAVE YOU BEEN EATING WELL?
SLEEPING WELL?

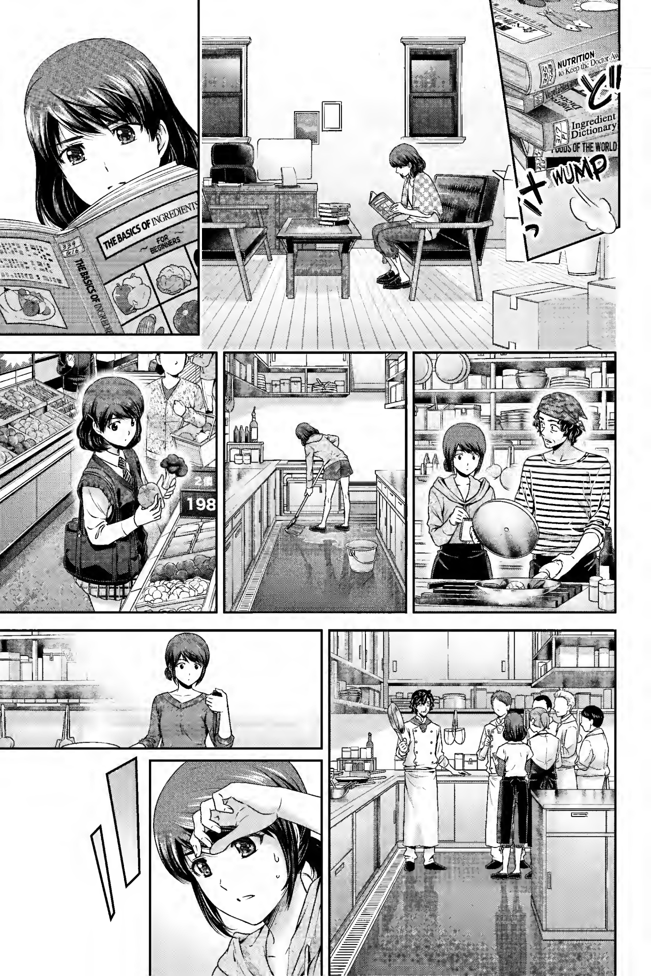

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?
I'VE BEEN WORRIED SICK!
EVER SINCE YOU LEFT,
WHETHER AT WORK OR AT DINNER, I'VE BEEN CONSTANTLY WONDERING HOW YOU'RE DOING...
DRIP ぽろ
DRIP ぽろ
RUI...
SORRY.
I'M SORRY.
I'VE ONLY BEEN THINKING ABOUT MYSELF.
I'M SORRY,
FUJII-
NO...

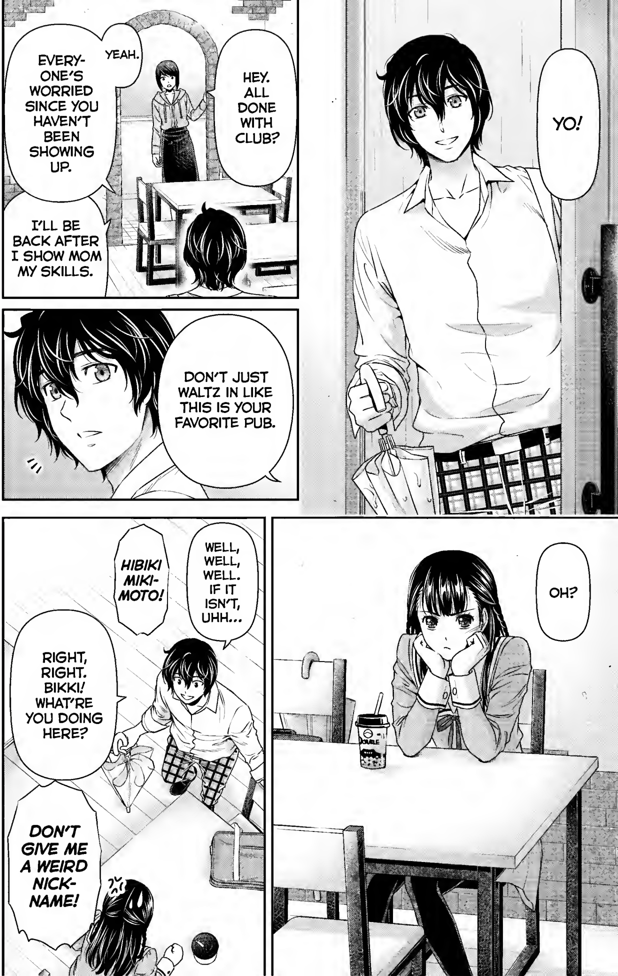

FATHER ...
tempo felice
6.18 sat OPEN!!
DELICIOUS!
DID YOU REALLY MAKE THIS, RUI-CHAN?!
UH-HUH. I USED SOME INGREDIENTS WE SET ASIDE FOR PRACTICE AND APPLIED WHAT DAD TAUGHT ME.
WOW!
IT'S A LITTLE DIFFERENT FROM WHAT YOU MAKE AT HOME, BUT IT'S VERY GOOD!
I WONDER WHAT ...
TSUKIKO-SAN WOULD SAY IF SHE TASTED THIS.

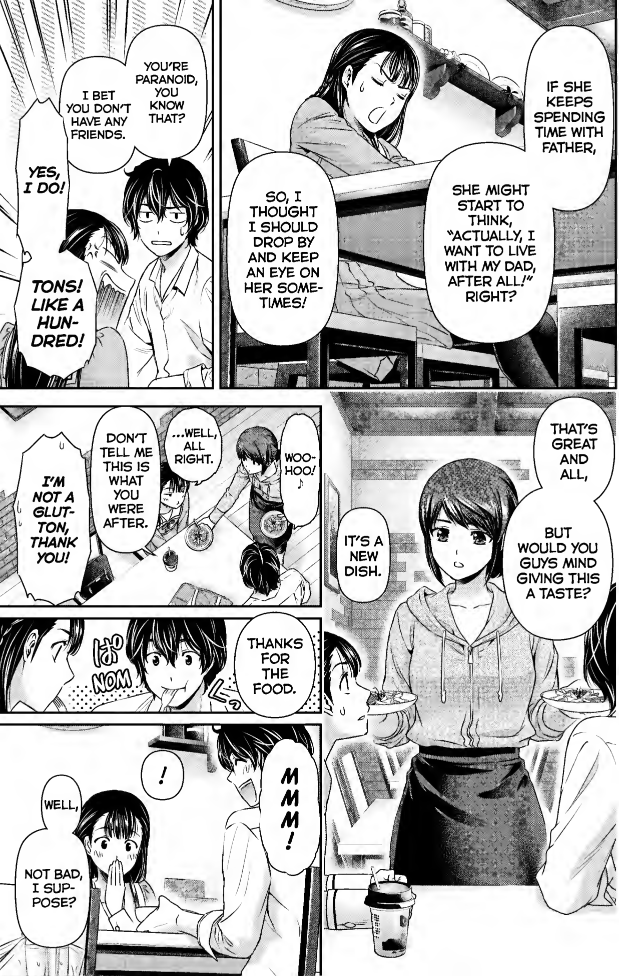

I KNOW YOU MIGHT HAVE GOTTEN THE WRONG IDEA,
BUT THE TRUTH IS...
...BOTH YOUR MOTHER AND I ARE ROOTING FOR YOU, RUI-CHAN.
NOTHING IS MORE JOYOUS FOR A PARENT THAN TO SEE THEIR CHILD PURSUE THEIR DREAMS.
NO PARENT SHOULD LET THEIR EMOTIONS GET IN THE WAY OF THAT.
TSUKIKO-SAN IS WELL AWARE OF THAT.
SHE'S A SMART WOMAN.
BUT SHE'S TORN BETWEEN WHAT SHE THINKS AND WHAT SHE FEELS.
"WHY WOULD RUI LIVE WITH THE MAN WHO BETRAYED US?" SHE'D SAY.
SHE DRINKS AND CRIES EVERY NIGHT LATELY.
WHEN SHE DOES, SHE ALWAYS TALKS ABOUT WHEN YOU GIRLS WERE LITTLE.
ABOUT HOW SHE WAS WORRIED HINA MIGHT HAVE BEEN TOO OBEDIENT AS A CHILD,
OR HOW RUI'S IMPULSIVE TENDENCIES ALWAYS HAD HER SWEATING BULLETS.

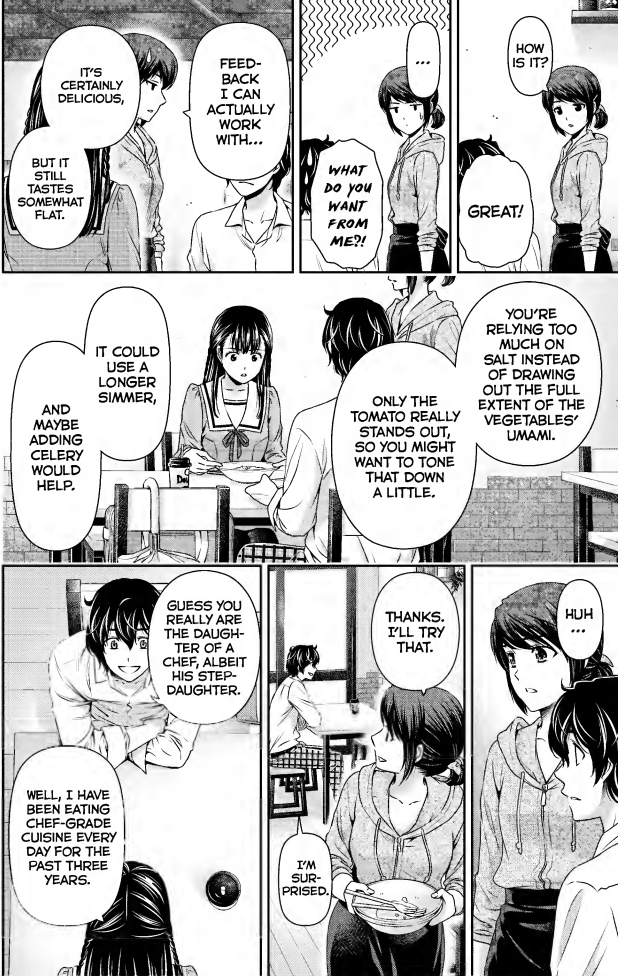

KINDA ANTICLIMACTIC, HUH?
IN A GOOD WAY.
I WAS A LITTLE SPOOKED WHEN THE AIR GOT TENSE THE MOMENT HE MET YOUR DAD.
YEAH ...
SO, WHAT'S THE PLAN ...
... FROM NOW ON?
...
RUNNING AWAY ...
WON'T SOLVE ANYTHING.

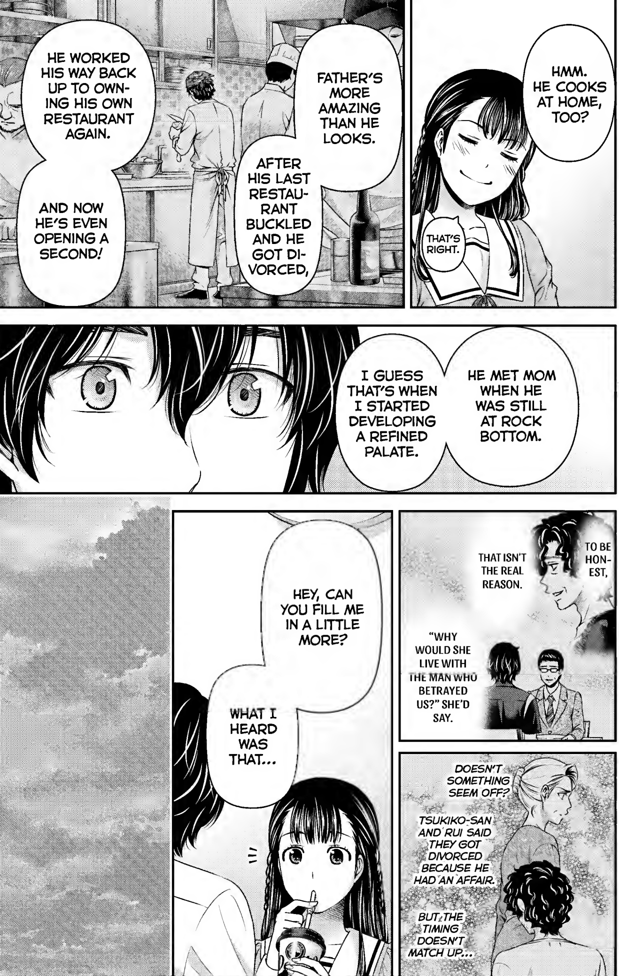

I'LL TRY...
...TO WIN MOM OVER WITH MY COOKING!
OKAY.
GO FOR IT!

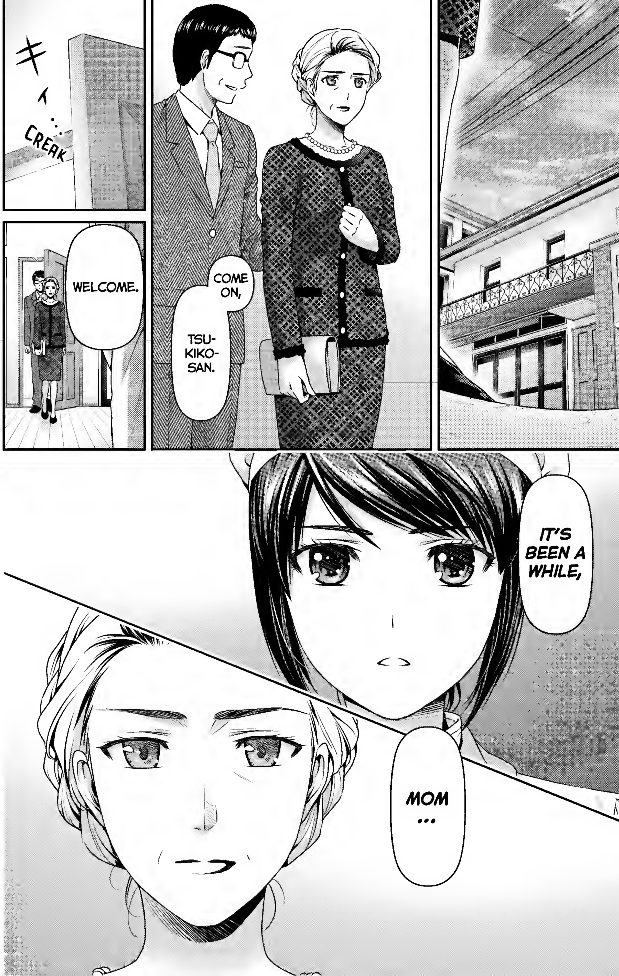

THE BASICS OF INGREDIENTS
~ FOR BEGINNERS ~
NUTRITION to Keep the Doctor Aw
Vegetables
Ingredient Dictionary
FOODS OF THE WORLD
ど!!
WUMP
2個
198


YO!
HEY. ALL DONE WITH CLUB?
YEAH.
EVERYONE'S WORRIED SINCE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN SHOWING UP.
I'LL BE BACK AFTER I SHOW MOM MY SKILLS.
DON'T JUST WALTZ IN LIKE THIS IS YOUR FAVORITE PUB.
OH?
WELL, WELL, WELL. IF IT ISN'T, UHH...
HIBIKI MIKIMOTO!
RIGHT, RIGHT. BIKKI! WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
DON'T GIVE ME A WEIRD NICKNAME!

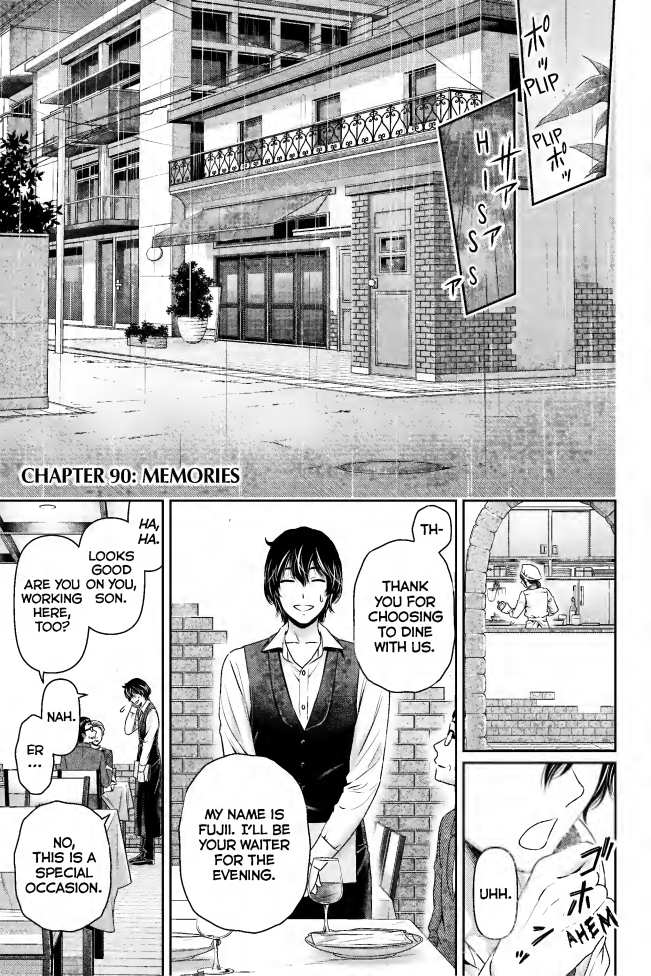

IF SHE KEEPS SPENDING TIME WITH FATHER,
SHE MIGHT START TO THINK, "ACTUALLY, I WANT TO LIVE WITH MY DAD, AFTER ALL!" RIGHT?
SO, I THOUGHT I SHOULD DROP BY AND KEEP AN EYE ON HER SOMETIMES!
YOU'RE PARANOID, YOU KNOW THAT?
I BET YOU DON'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS.
YES, I DO!
TONS! LIKE A HUNDRED!
THAT'S GREAT AND ALL,
BUT WOULD YOU GUYS MIND GIVING THIS A TASTE?
IT'S A NEW DISH.
WOO-HOO! ♪
...WELL, ALL RIGHT.
DON'T TELL ME THIS IS WHAT YOU WERE AFTER.
I'M NOT A GLUTTON, THANK YOU!
THANKS FOR THE FOOD.
ぱ NOM
MMM!
!
WELL,
NOT BAD, I SUPPOSE?

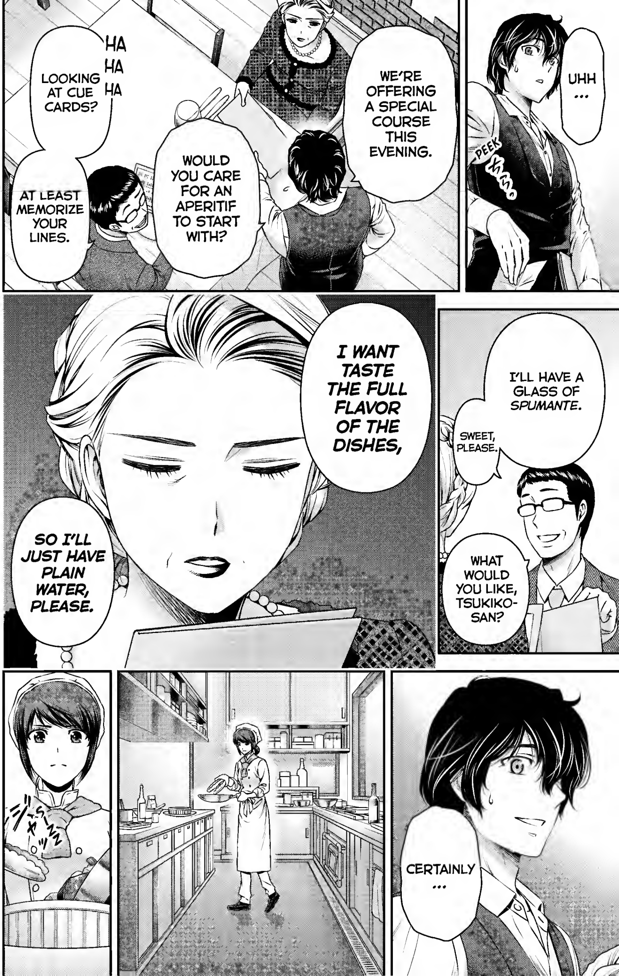

HOW IS IT?
GREAT!
...
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?!
FEEDBACK I CAN ACTUALLY WORK WITH...
IT'S CERTAINLY DELICIOUS,
BUT IT STILL TASTES SOMEWHAT FLAT.
YOU'RE RELYING TOO MUCH ON SALT INSTEAD OF DRAWING OUT THE FULL EXTENT OF THE VEGETABLES' UMAMI.
ONLY THE TOMATO REALLY STANDS OUT, SO YOU MIGHT WANT TO TONE THAT DOWN A LITTLE.
IT COULD USE A LONGER SIMMER,
AND MAYBE ADDING CELERY WOULD HELP.
HUH...
THANKS. I'LL TRY THAT.
I'M SURPRISED.
GUESS YOU REALLY ARE THE DAUGHTER OF A CHEF, ALBEIT HIS STEPDAUGHTER.
WELL, I HAVE BEEN EATING CHEF-GRADE CUISINE EVERY DAY FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS.

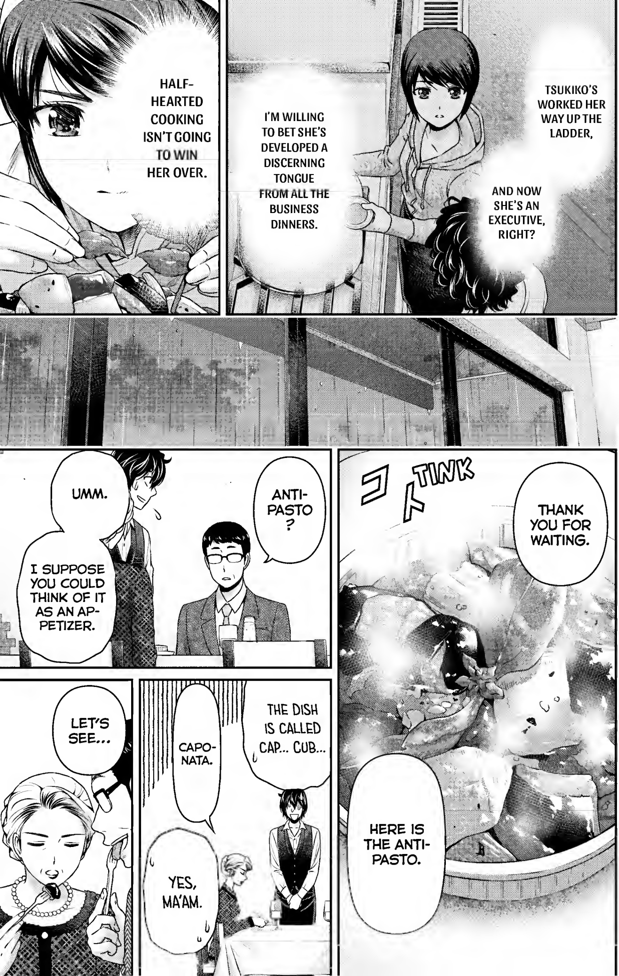

HMM. HE COOKS AT HOME, TOO?
THAT'S RIGHT.
FATHER'S MORE AMAZING THAN HE LOOKS.
AFTER HIS LAST RESTAURANT BUCKLED AND HE GOT DIVORCED,
HE WORKED HIS WAY BACK UP TO OWNING HIS OWN RESTAURANT AGAIN.
AND NOW HE'S EVEN OPENING A SECOND!
HE MET MOM WHEN HE WAS STILL AT ROCK BOTTOM.
I GUESS THAT'S WHEN I STARTED DEVELOPING A REFINED PALATE.
TO BE HONEST,
THAT ISN'T THE REAL REASON.
"WHY WOULD SHE LIVE WITH THE MAN WHO BETRAYED US?" SHE'D SAY.
DOESN'T SOMETHING SEEM OFF?
TSUKIKO-SAN AND RUI SAID THEY GOT DIVORCED BECAUSE HE HAD AN AFFAIR.
BUT THE TIMING DOESN'T MATCH UP...
HEY, CAN YOU FILL ME IN A LITTLE MORE?
WHAT I HEARD WAS THAT...

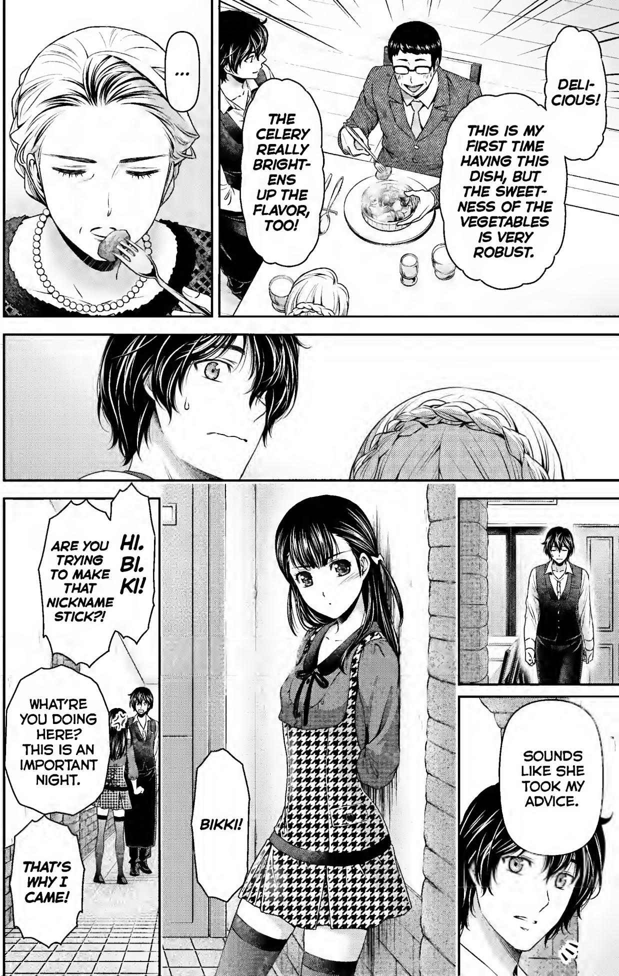

COME ON,
TSUKIKO-SAN.
キィ…
CREAK
WELCOME.
IT'S BEEN A WHILE,
MOM…

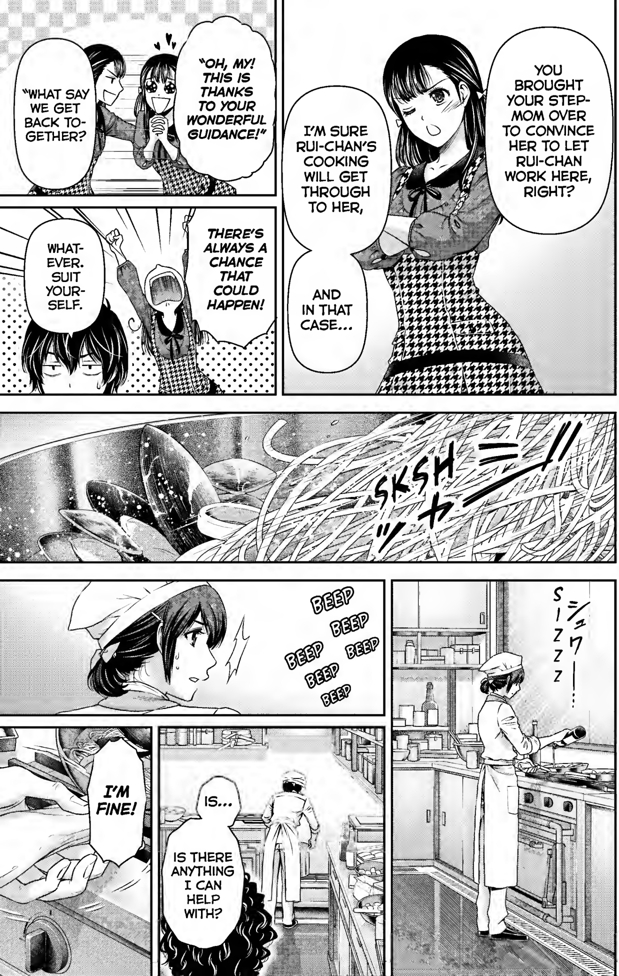
CHAPTER 90: MEMORIES

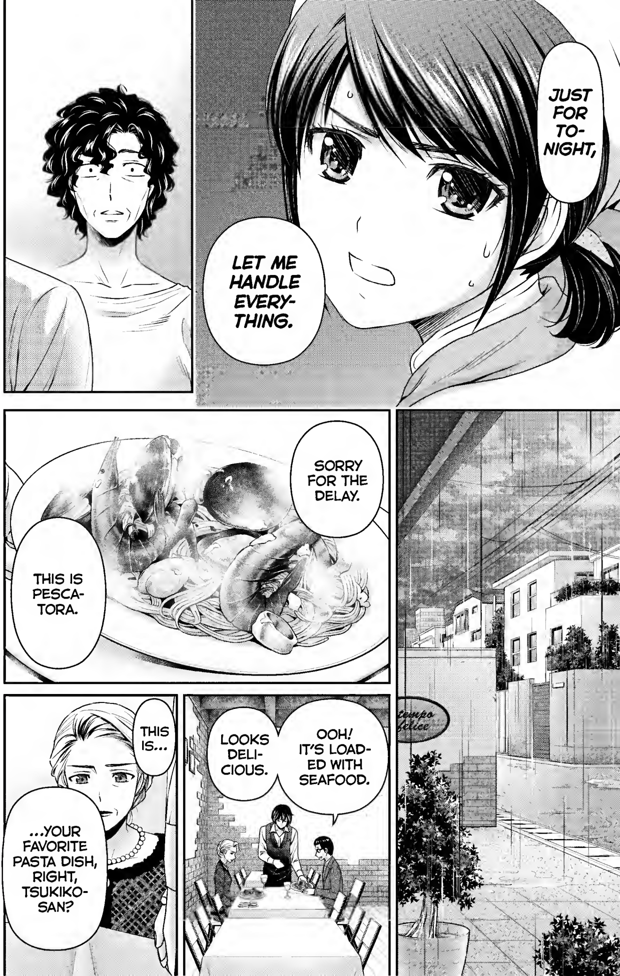

ポッ
PLIP
PLIP
ポッ
HISS
ザァ
ザァ
UHH.
ゴホ
AHEM
TH-
THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING TO DINE WITH US.
MY NAME IS FUJII. I'LL BE YOUR WAITER FOR THE EVENING.
HA, HA.
LOOKS GOOD ON YOU, SON.
ARE YOU WORKING HERE, TOO?
NAH.
ER...
NO, THIS IS A SPECIAL OCCASION.

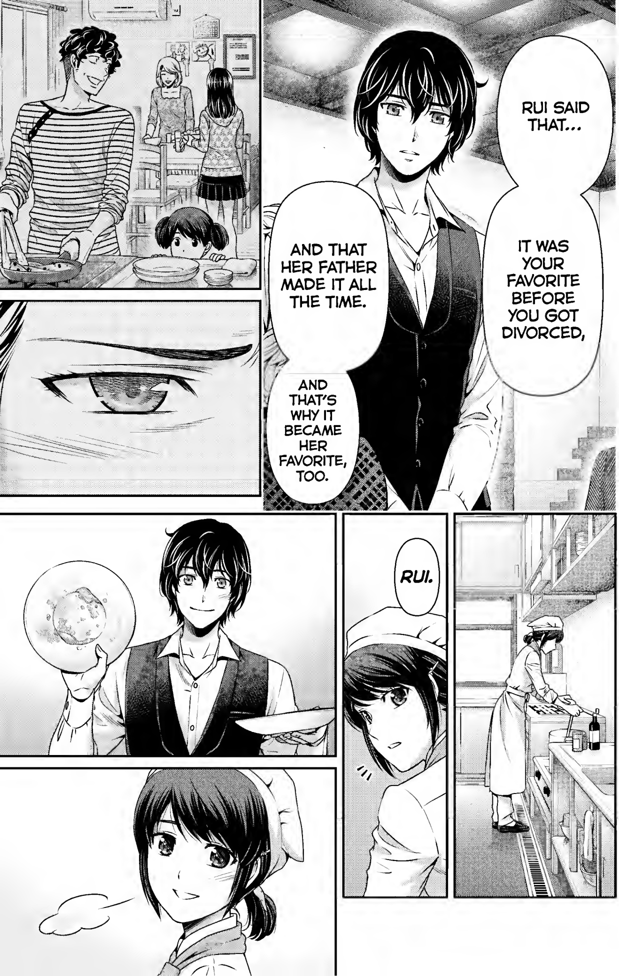

UHH ...
PEEK
WE'RE OFFERING A SPECIAL COURSE THIS EVENING.
WOULD YOU CARE FOR AN APERITIF TO START WITH?
HA HA HA
LOOKING AT CUE CARDS?
AT LEAST MEMORIZE YOUR LINES.
I'LL HAVE A GLASS OF *SPUMANTE.*
SWEET, PLEASE.
WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE, TSUKIKO-SAN?
I WANT TASTE THE FULL FLAVOR OF THE DISHES,
SO I'LL JUST HAVE PLAIN WATER, PLEASE.
CERTAINLY ...
ジャッ
SIZZ

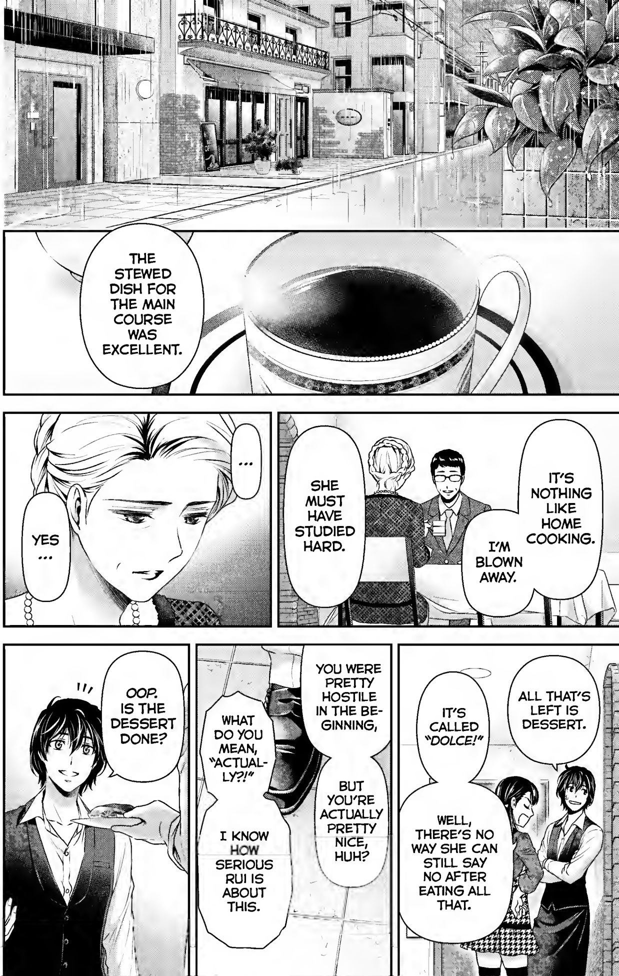

TSUKIKO'S WORKED HER WAY UP THE LADDER,
AND NOW SHE'S AN EXECUTIVE, RIGHT?
I'M WILLING TO BET SHE'S DEVELOPED A DISCERNING TONGUE FROM ALL THE BUSINESS DINNERS.
HALF-HEARTED COOKING ISN'T GOING TO WIN HER OVER.
コト TINK
THANK YOU FOR WAITING.
HERE IS THE ANTIPASTO.
ANTIPASTO?
UMM.
I SUPPOSE YOU COULD THINK OF IT AS AN APPETIZER.
THE DISH IS CALLED CAP... CUB...
CAPONATA.
YES, MA'AM.
LET'S SEE...

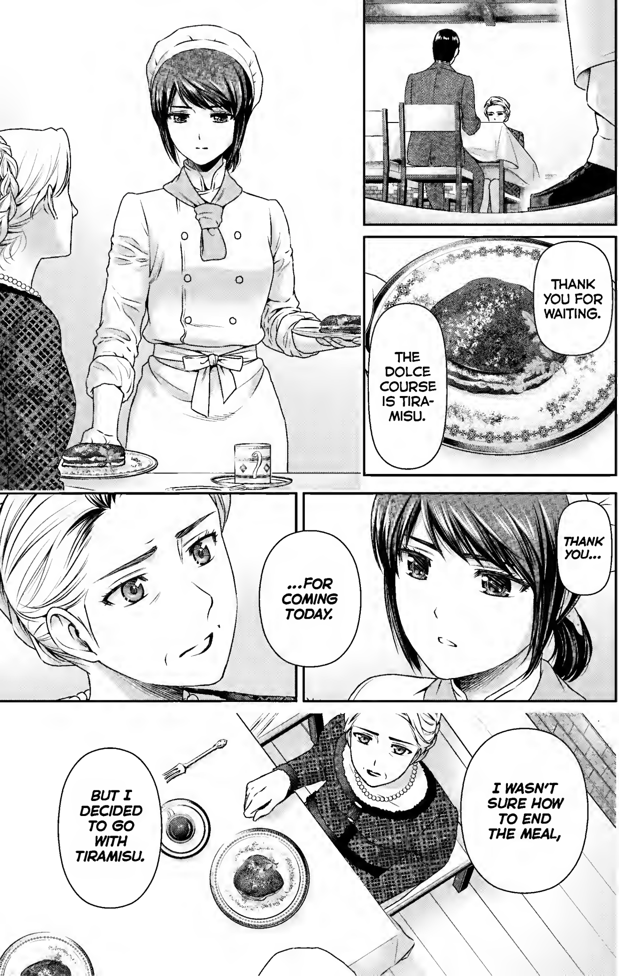

DELICIOUS!
THIS IS MY FIRST TIME HAVING THIS DISH, BUT THE SWEETNESS OF THE VEGETABLES IS VERY ROBUST.
THE CELERY REALLY BRIGHTENS UP THE FLAVOR, TOO!
...
SOUNDS LIKE SHE TOOK MY ADVICE.
BIKKI!
HI. BI. KI!
ARE YOU TRYING TO MAKE THAT NICKNAME STICK?!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE? THIS IS AN IMPORTANT NIGHT.
THAT'S WHY I CAME!

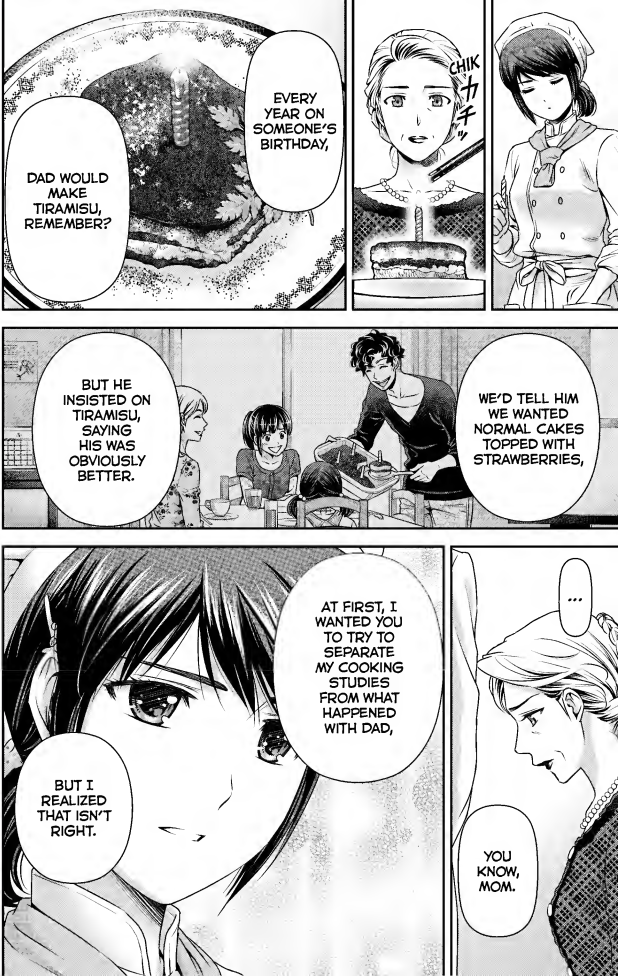

YOU BROUGHT YOUR STEPMOM OVER TO CONVINCE HER TO LET RUI-CHAN WORK HERE, RIGHT?
I'M SURE RUI-CHAN'S COOKING WILL GET THROUGH TO HER,
AND IN THAT CASE...
"OH, MY! THIS IS THANKS TO YOUR WONDERFUL GUIDANCE!"
"WHAT SAY WE GET BACK TOGETHER?
THERE'S ALWAYS A CHANCE THAT COULD HAPPEN!
WHATEVER. SUIT YOURSELF.
SKSH
シャッ
SIZZZ
シュワー…
BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP
IS...
IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN HELP WITH?
I'M FINE!

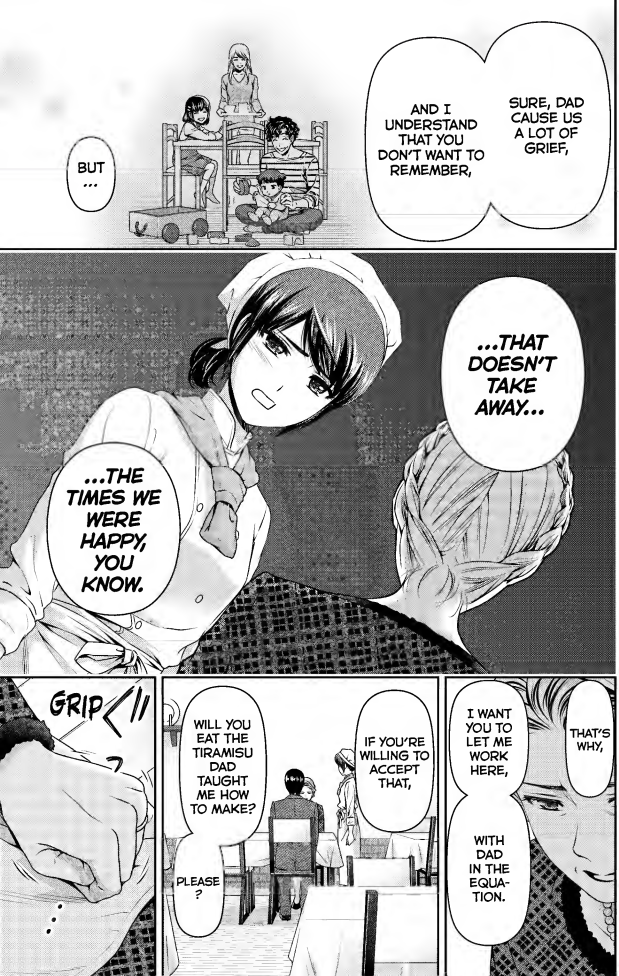

JUST FOR TONIGHT,
LET ME HANDLE EVERYTHING.
tempo felice
SORRY FOR THE DELAY.
THIS IS PESCATORA.
OOH! IT'S LOADED WITH SEAFOOD.
LOOKS DELICIOUS.
THIS IS...
...YOUR FAVORITE PASTA DISH, RIGHT, TSUKIKO-SAN?

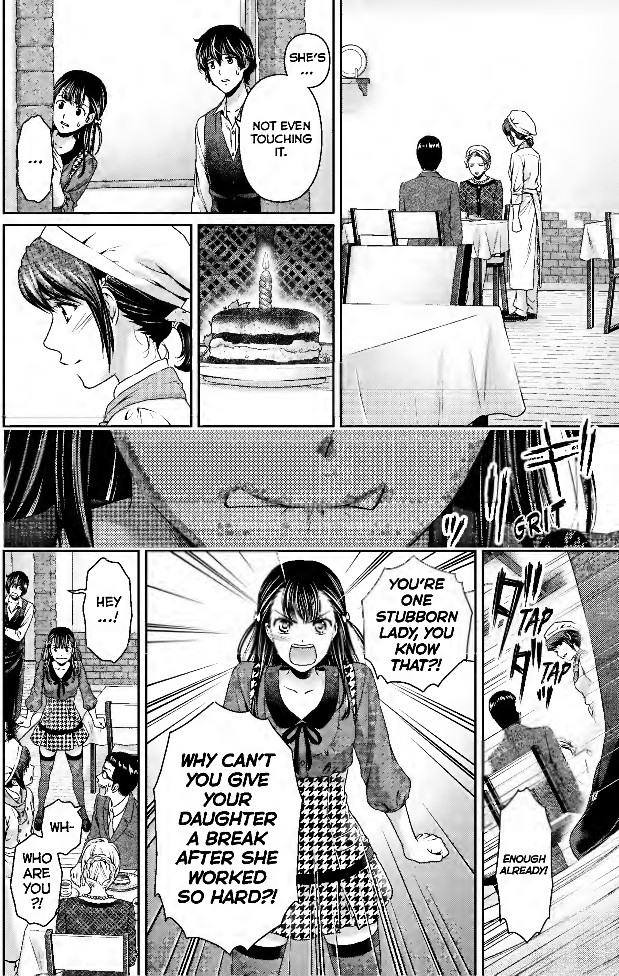

RUI SAID THAT...
IT WAS YOUR FAVORITE BEFORE YOU GOT DIVORCED,
AND THAT HER FATHER MADE IT ALL THE TIME.
AND THAT'S WHY IT BECAME HER FAVORITE, TOO.
RUI.

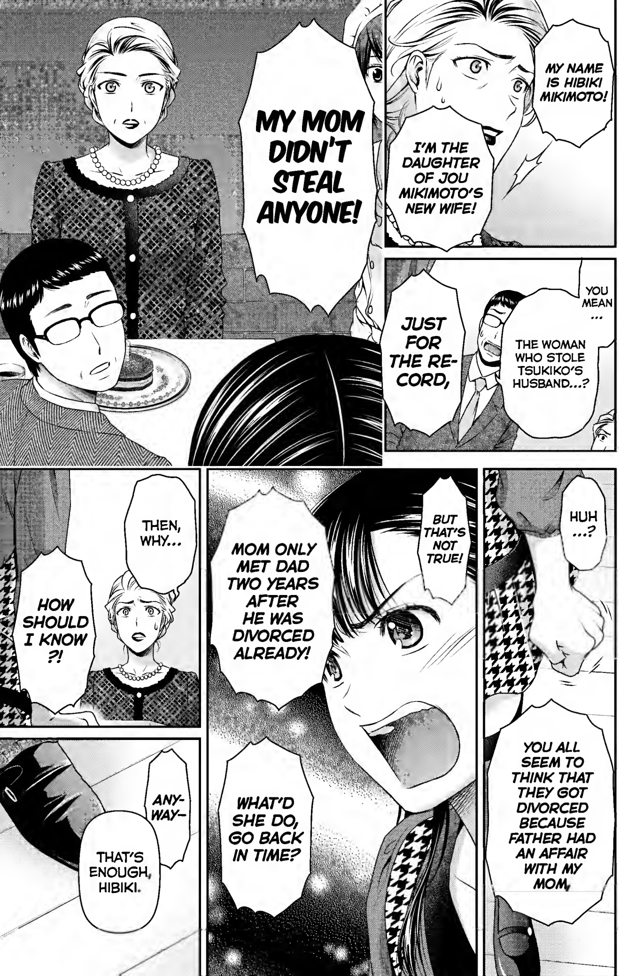

THE STEWED DISH FOR THE MAIN COURSE WAS EXCELLENT.
IT'S NOTHING LIKE HOME COOKING.
I'M BLOWN AWAY.
SHE MUST HAVE STUDIED HARD.
...
YES ...
ALL THAT'S LEFT IS DESSERT.
IT'S CALLED *"DOLCE!"*
WELL, THERE'S NO WAY SHE CAN STILL SAY NO AFTER EATING ALL THAT.
YOU WERE PRETTY HOSTILE IN THE BEGINNING,
BUT YOU'RE ACTUALLY PRETTY NICE, HUH?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "ACTUALLY?!"
I KNOW HOW SERIOUS RUI IS ABOUT THIS.
OOP. IS THE DESSERT DONE?

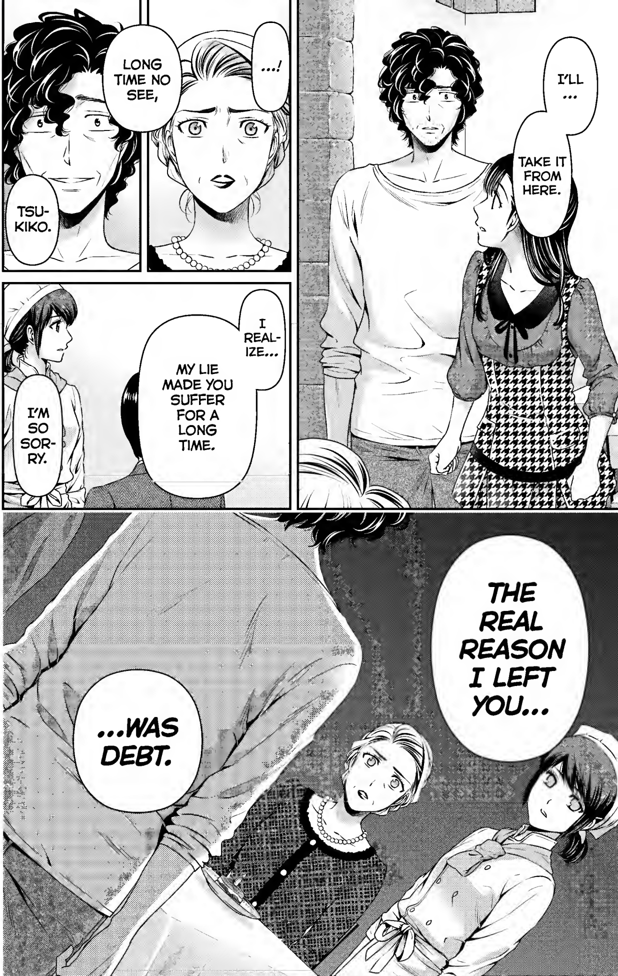

THANK YOU FOR WAITING.
THE DOLCE COURSE IS TIRAMISU.
THANK YOU...
...FOR COMING TODAY.
I WASN'T SURE HOW TO END THE MEAL,
BUT I DECIDED TO GO WITH TIRAMISU.

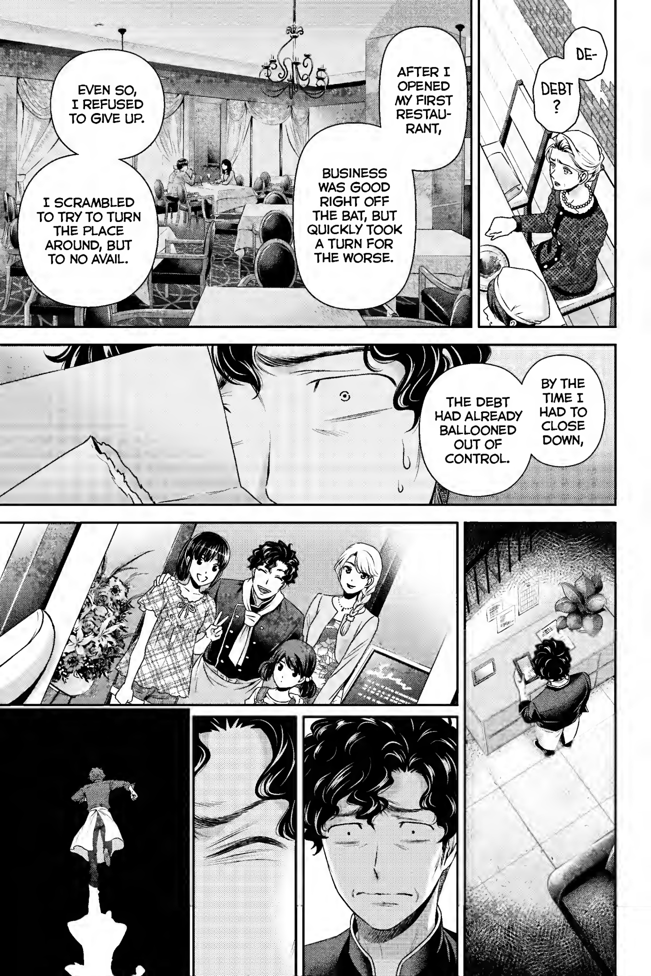

CHIK
カチッ
EVERY YEAR ON SOMEONE'S BIRTHDAY,
DAD WOULD MAKE TIRAMISU, REMEMBER?
WE'D TELL HIM WE WANTED NORMAL CAKES TOPPED WITH STRAWBERRIES,
BUT HE INSISTED ON TIRAMISU, SAYING HIS WAS OBVIOUSLY BETTER.
...
YOU KNOW, MOM.
AT FIRST, I WANTED YOU TO TRY TO SEPARATE MY COOKING STUDIES FROM WHAT HAPPENED WITH DAD,
BUT I REALIZED THAT ISN'T RIGHT.

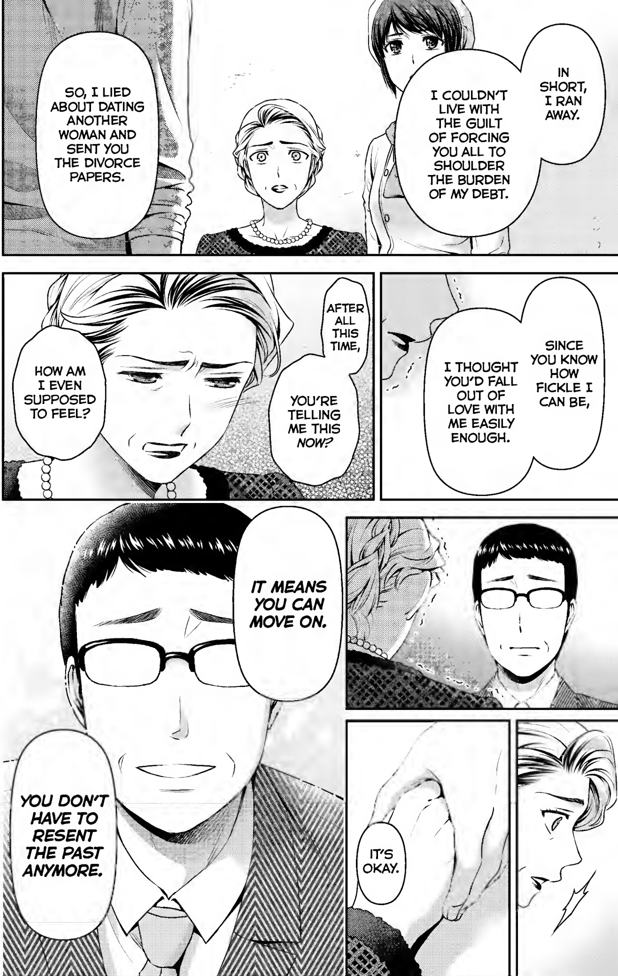

SURE, DAD CAUSE US A LOT OF GRIEF,
AND I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO REMEMBER,
BUT ...
...THAT DOESN'T TAKE AWAY...
...THE TIMES WE WERE HAPPY, YOU KNOW.
THAT'S WHY,
I WANT YOU TO LET ME WORK HERE,
WITH DAD IN THE EQUATION.
IF YOU'RE WILLING TO ACCEPT THAT,
WILL YOU EAT THE TIRAMISU DAD TAUGHT ME HOW TO MAKE?
PLEASE ?
GRIP
...

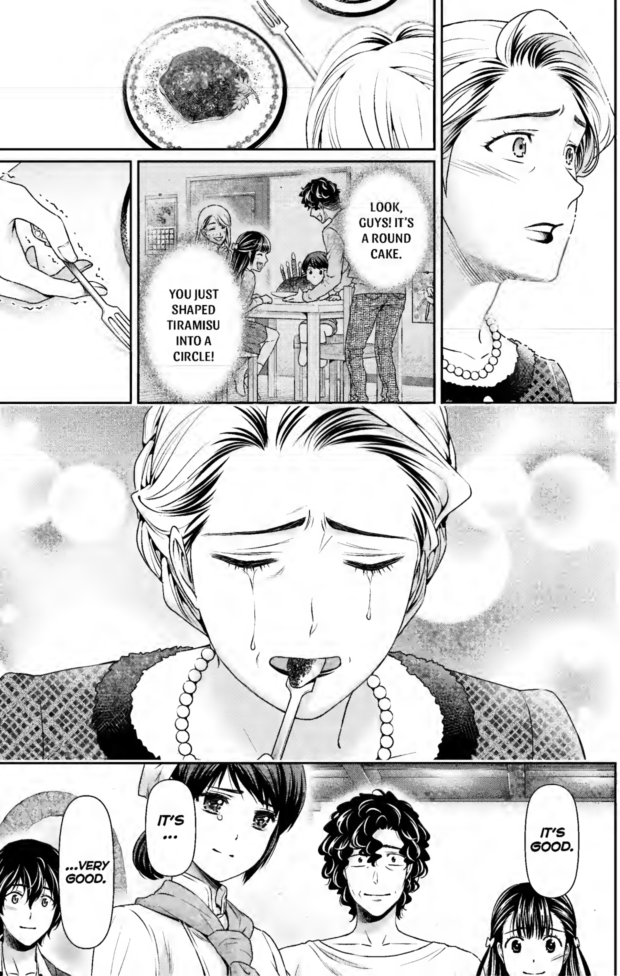

SHE'S ...
NOT EVEN TOUCHING IT.
...
GRIT
TAP
TAP
ENOUGH ALREADY!
YOU'RE ONE STUBBORN LADY, YOU KNOW THAT?!
WHY CAN'T YOU GIVE YOUR DAUGHTER A BREAK AFTER SHE WORKED SO HARD?!
HEY ...!
WH-
WHO ARE YOU ?!

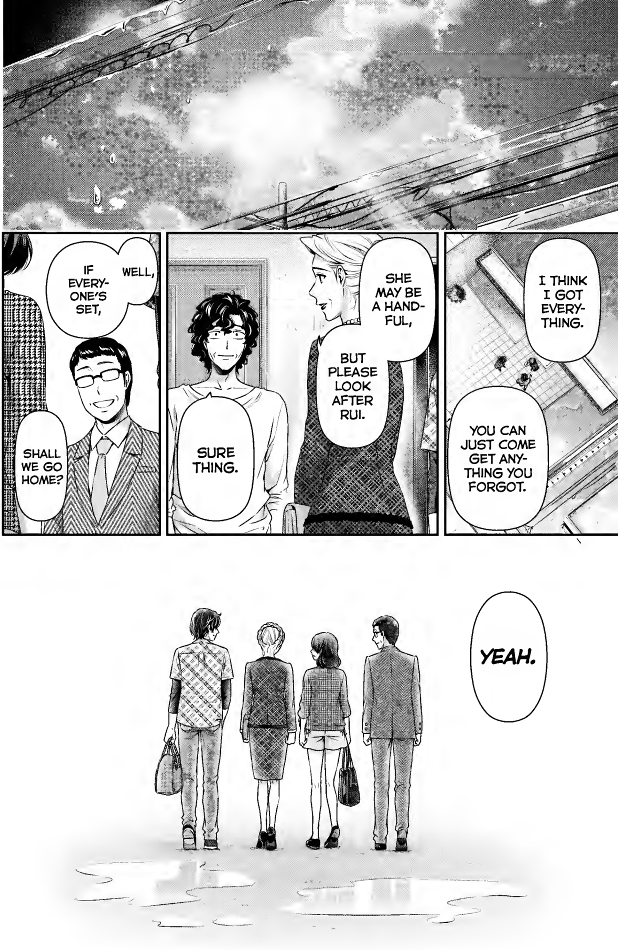

MY NAME IS HIBIKI MIKIMOTO!
I'M THE DAUGHTER OF JOU MIKIMOTO'S NEW WIFE!
YOU MEAN...
THE WOMAN WHO STOLE TSUKIKO'S HUSBAND...?
JUST FOR THE RECORD,
MY MOM DIDN'T STEAL ANYONE!
HUH...?
YOU ALL SEEM TO THINK THAT THEY GOT DIVORCED BECAUSE FATHER HAD AN AFFAIR WITH MY MOM,
BUT THAT'S NOT TRUE!
MOM ONLY MET DAD TWO YEARS AFTER HE WAS DIVORCED ALREADY!
WHAT'D SHE DO, GO BACK IN TIME?
THEN, WHY...
HOW SHOULD I KNOW?!
ANYWAY—
THAT'S ENOUGH, HIBIKI.


I'LL ...
TAKE IT FROM HERE.
...!
LONG TIME NO SEE,
TSUKIKO.
I REALIZE...
MY LIE MADE YOU SUFFER FOR A LONG TIME.
I'M SO SORRY.
THE REAL REASON I LEFT YOU...
...WAS DEBT.

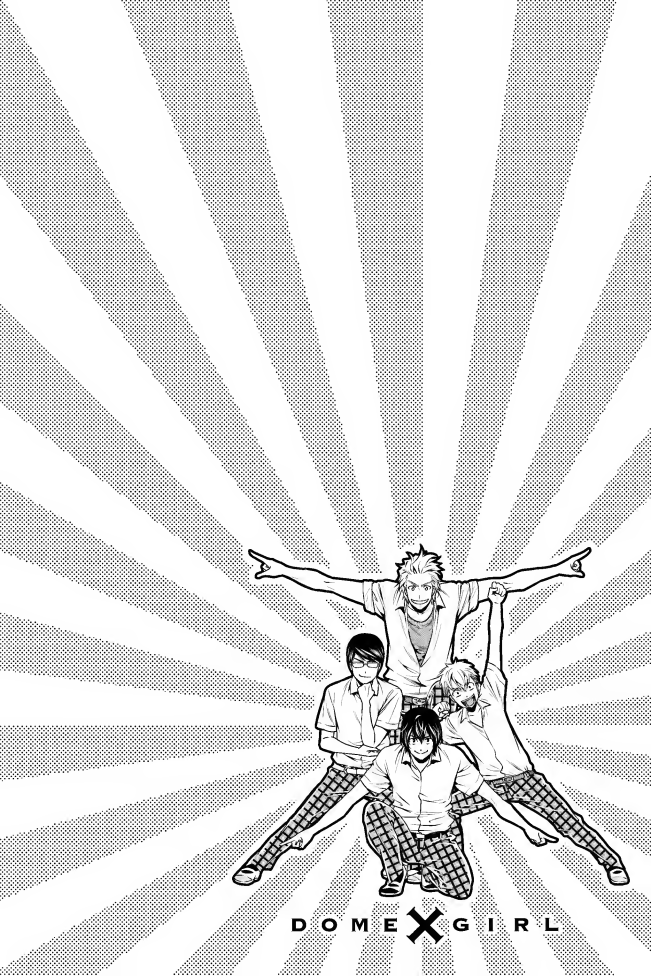

DE- DEBT?
AFTER I OPENED MY FIRST RESTAURANT,
BUSINESS WAS GOOD RIGHT OFF THE BAT, BUT QUICKLY TOOK A TURN FOR THE WORSE.
EVEN SO, I REFUSED TO GIVE UP.
I SCRAMBLED TO TRY TO TURN THE PLACE AROUND, BUT TO NO AVAIL.
BY THE TIME I HAD TO CLOSE DOWN,
THE DEBT HAD ALREADY BALLOONED OUT OF CONTROL.

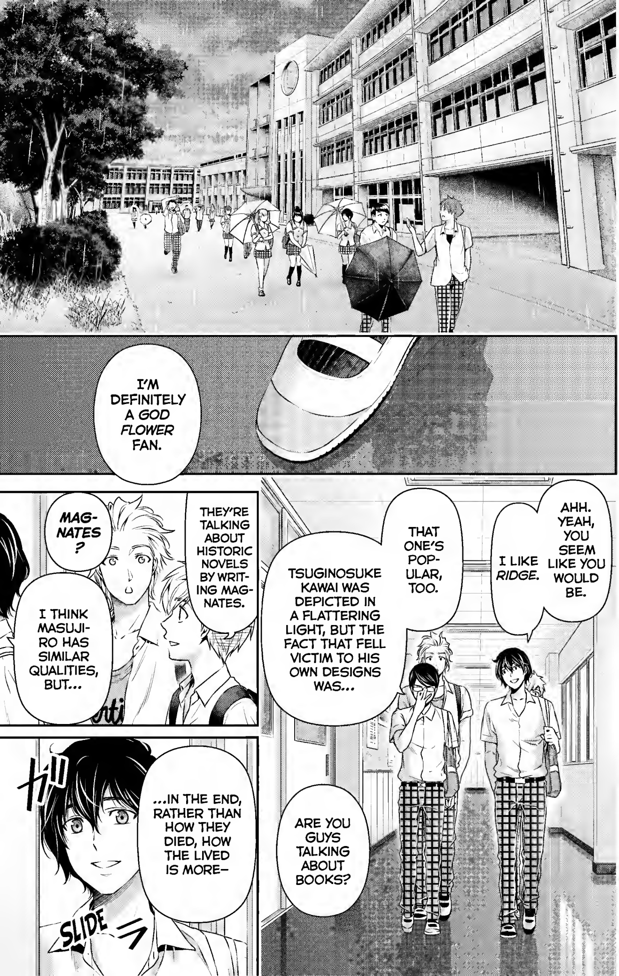

IN SHORT, I RAN AWAY.
I COULDN'T LIVE WITH THE GUILT OF FORCING YOU ALL TO SHOULDER THE BURDEN OF MY DEBT.
SO, I LIED ABOUT DATING ANOTHER WOMAN AND SENT YOU THE DIVORCE PAPERS.
SINCE YOU KNOW HOW FICKLE I CAN BE,
I THOUGHT YOU'D FALL OUT OF LOVE WITH ME EASILY ENOUGH.
AFTER ALL THIS TIME,
YOU'RE TELLING ME THIS *NOW?*
HOW AM I EVEN SUPPOSED TO FEEL?
IT MEANS YOU CAN MOVE ON.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO RESENT THE PAST ANYMORE.
IT'S OKAY.

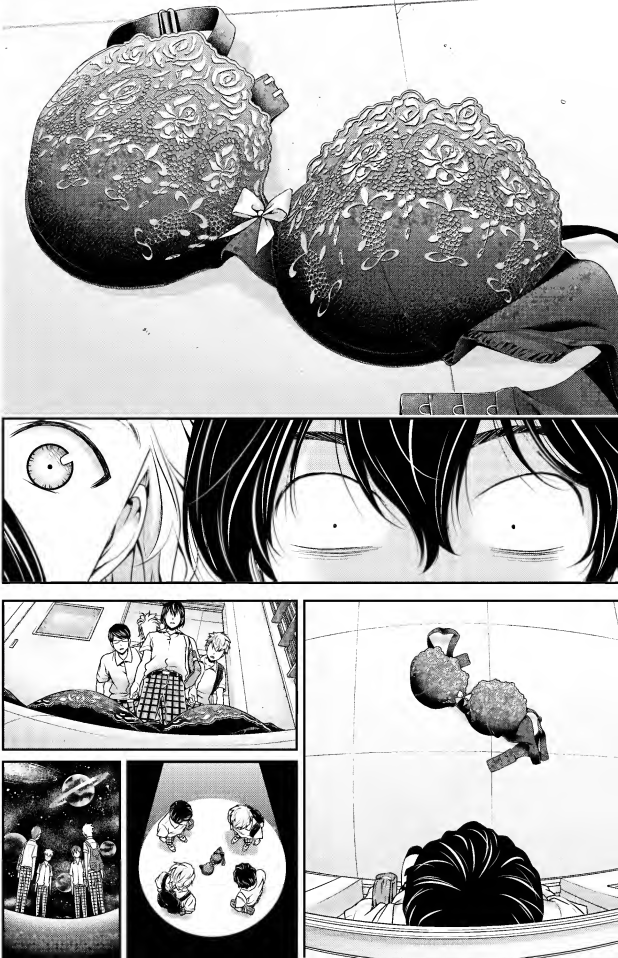

LOOK, GUYS! IT'S A ROUND CAKE.
YOU JUST SHAPED TIRAMISU INTO A CIRCLE!
IT'S GOOD.
IT'S ...
...VERY GOOD.

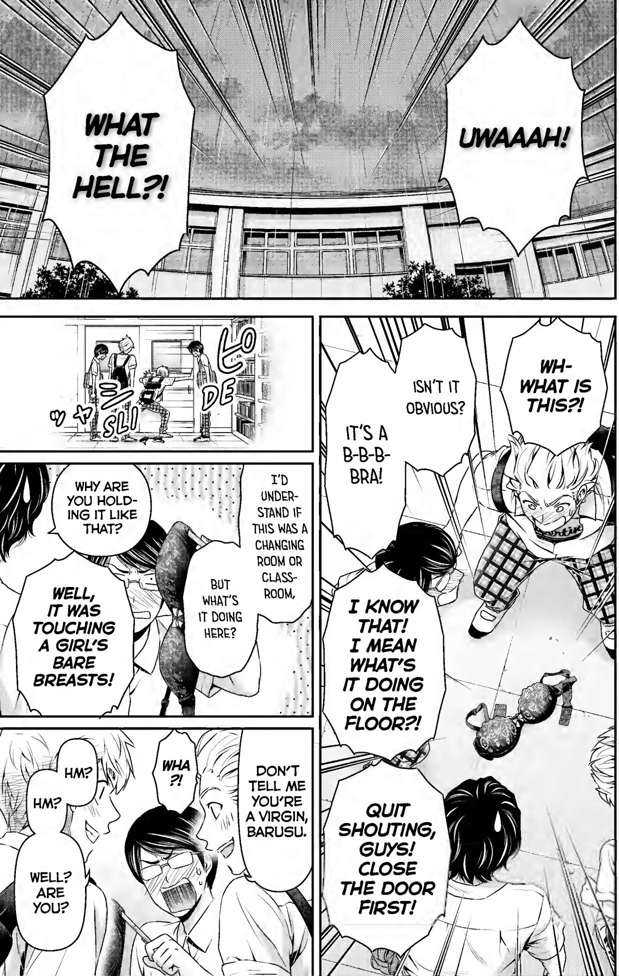

I THINK I GOT EVERYTHING.
YOU CAN JUST COME GET ANYTHING YOU FORGOT.
SHE MAY BE A HANDFUL,
BUT PLEASE LOOK AFTER RUI.
SURE THING.
WELL,
IF EVERYONE'S SET,
SHALL WE GO HOME?
YEAH.

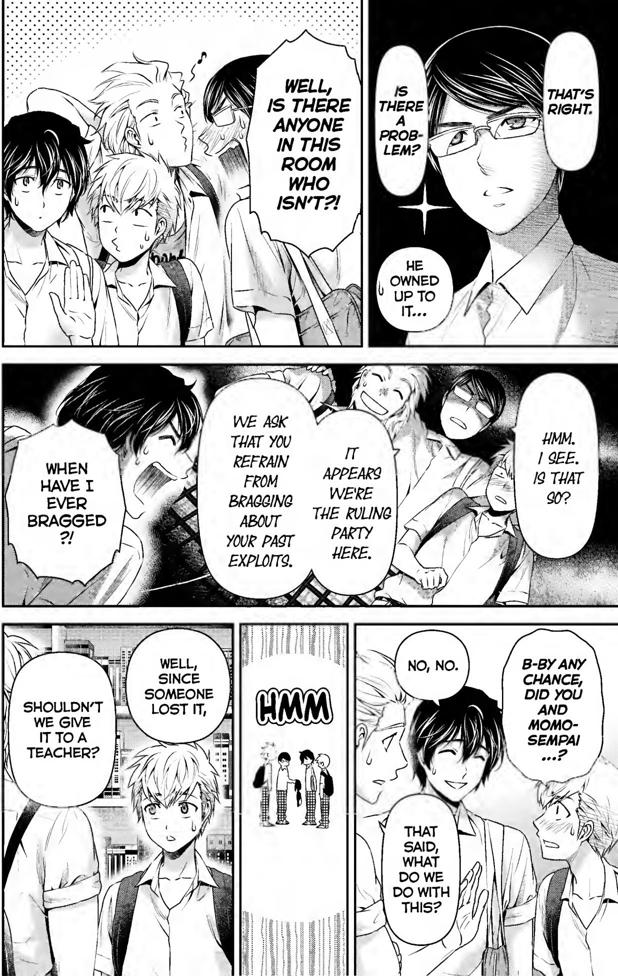
CHAPTER 91: BRA-BRA PANIC

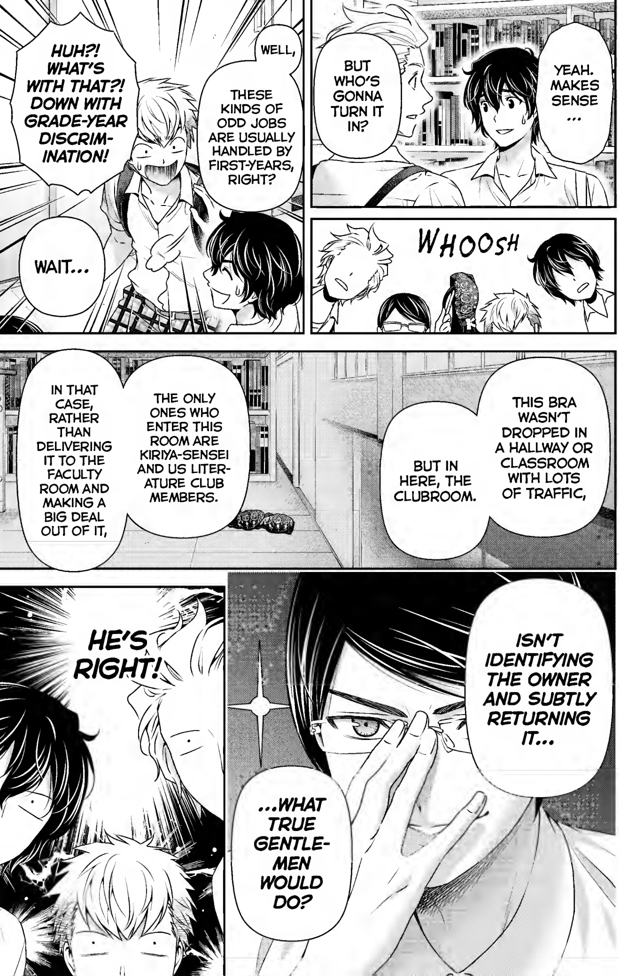

DOME X GIRL

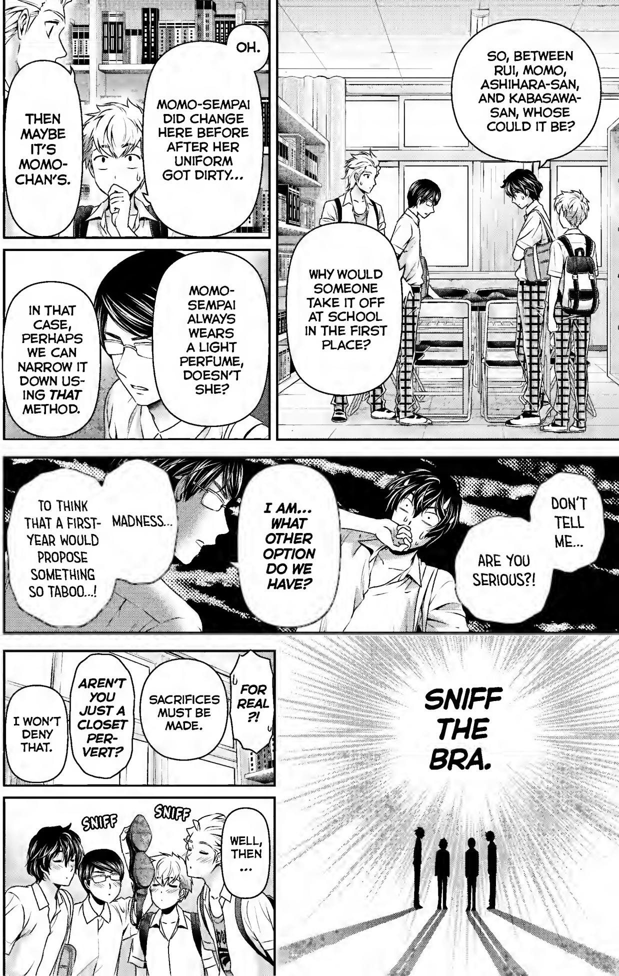

I'M DEFINITELY A *GOD FLOWER* FAN.
AHH. YEAH, YOU SEEM LIKE *YOU* WOULD BE.
I LIKE *RIDGE*.
THAT ONE'S POPULAR, TOO.
TSUGINOSUKE KAWAI WAS DEPICTED IN A FLATTERING LIGHT, BUT THE FACT THAT FELL VICTIM TO HIS OWN DESIGNS WAS...
THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT HISTORIC NOVELS BY WRITING MAGNATES.
MAGNATES?
I THINK MASUJIRO HAS SIMILAR QUALITIES, BUT...
...IN THE END, RATHER THAN HOW THEY DIED, HOW THE LIVED IS MORE—
ガラ
SLIDE
ARE YOU GUYS TALKING ABOUT BOOKS?

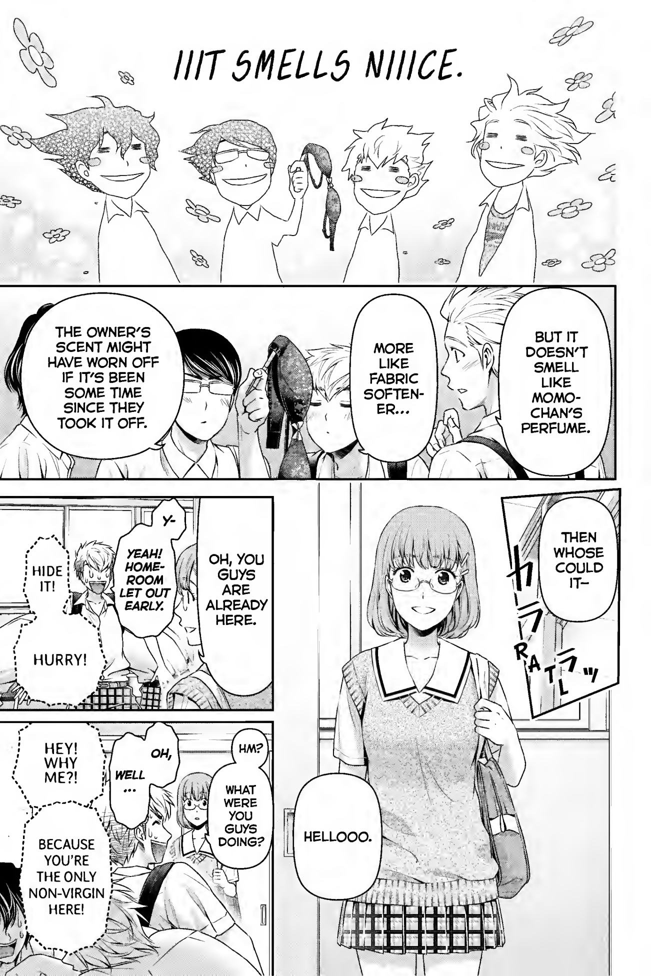


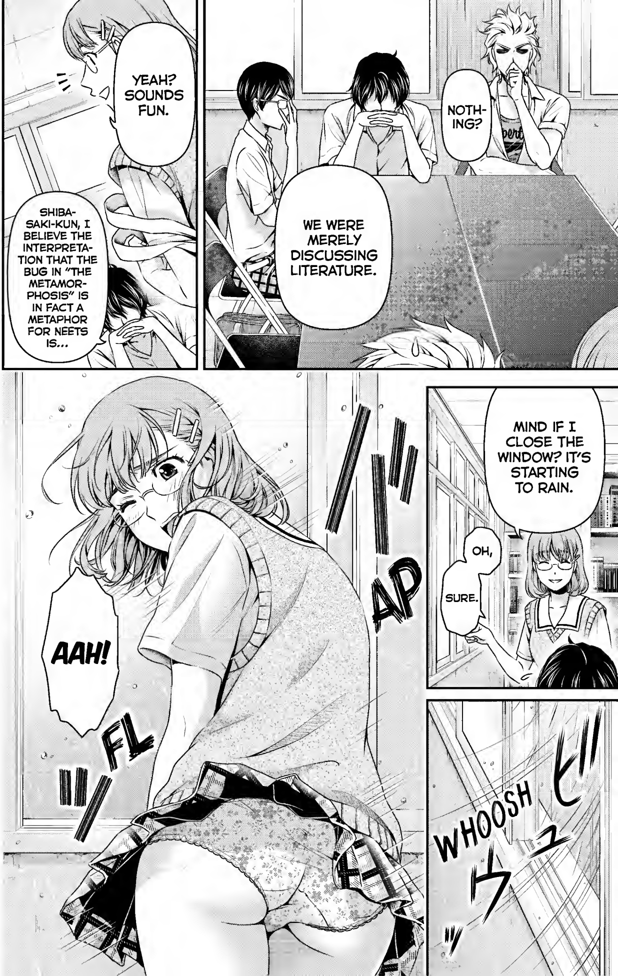

UWAAAH!
WHAT THE HELL?!
WH- WHAT IS THIS?!
ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?
IT'S A B-B-B-BRA!
I KNOW THAT! I MEAN WHAT'S IT DOING ON THE FLOOR?!
QUIT SHOUTING, GUYS! CLOSE THE DOOR FIRST!
SLIDE
I'D UNDERSTAND IF THIS WAS A CHANGING ROOM OR CLASSROOM,
BUT WHAT'S IT DOING HERE?
WHY ARE YOU HOLDING IT LIKE THAT?
WELL, IT WAS TOUCHING A GIRL'S BARE BREASTS!
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE A VIRGIN, BARUSU.
WHA ?!
HM?
HM?
WELL? ARE YOU?

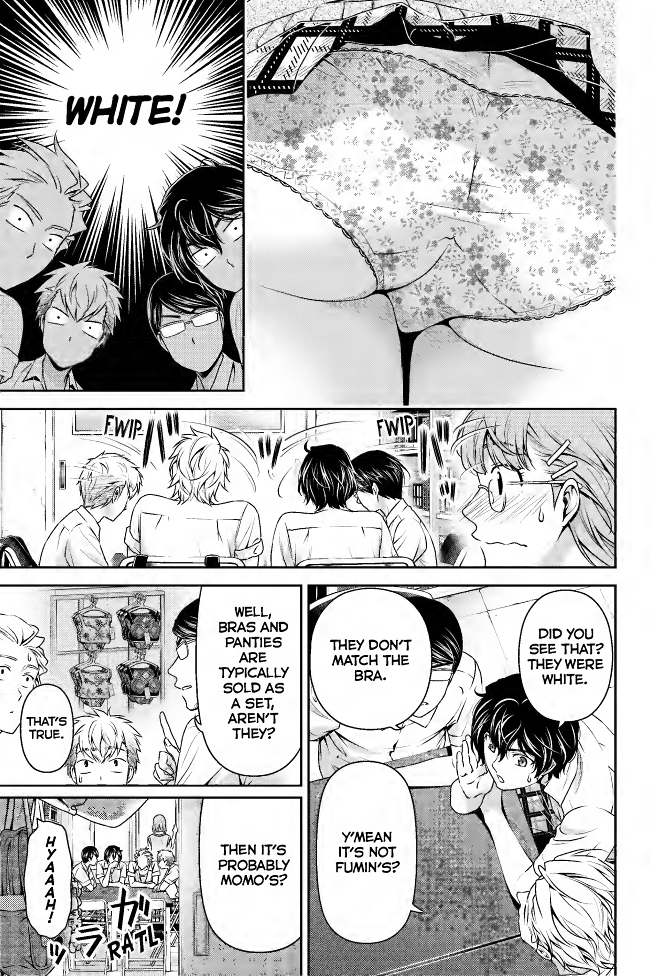

THAT'S RIGHT.
IS THERE A PROBLEM?
HE OWNED UP TO IT...
WELL, IS THERE ANYONE IN THIS ROOM WHO ISN'T?!
HMM. I SEE. IS THAT SO?
IT APPEARS WE'RE THE RULING PARTY HERE.
WE ASK THAT YOU REFRAIN FROM BRAGGING ABOUT YOUR PAST EXPLOITS.
WHEN HAVE I EVER BRAGGED?!
B-BY ANY CHANCE, DID YOU AND MOMO-SEMPAI ...?
NO, NO.
THAT SAID, WHAT DO WE DO WITH THIS?
HMM
WELL, SINCE SOMEONE LOST IT,
SHOULDN'T WE GIVE IT TO A TEACHER?

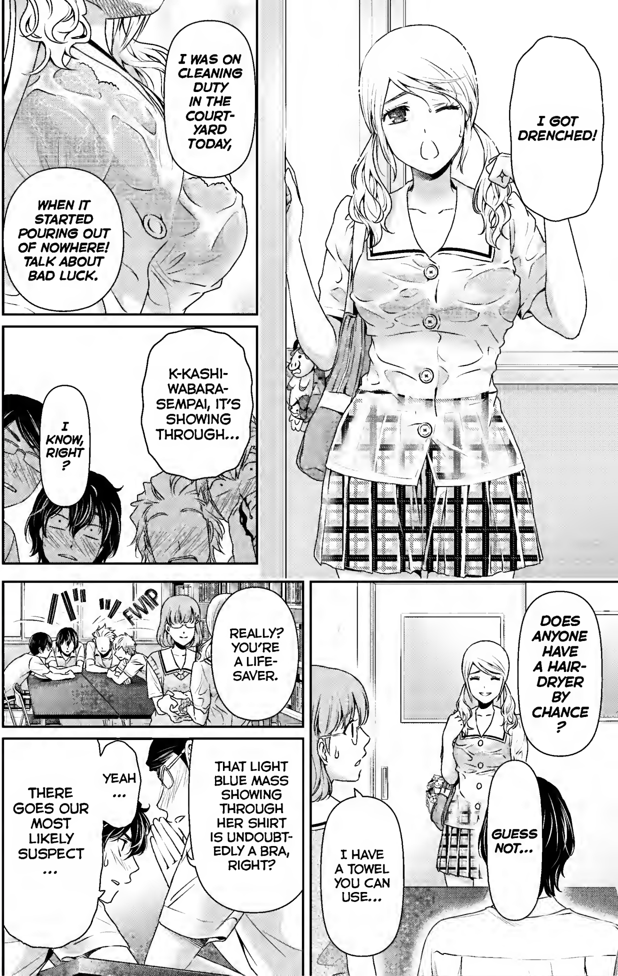

YEAH. MAKES SENSE ...
BUT WHO'S GONNA TURN IT IN?
WELL,
THESE KINDS OF ODD JOBS ARE USUALLY HANDLED BY FIRST-YEARS, RIGHT?
HUH?! WHAT'S WITH THAT?! DOWN WITH GRADE-YEAR DISCRIMINATION!
WAIT...
WHOOSH
THIS BRA WASN'T DROPPED IN A HALLWAY OR CLASSROOM WITH LOTS OF TRAFFIC,
BUT IN HERE, THE CLUBROOM.
THE ONLY ONES WHO ENTER THIS ROOM ARE KIRIYA-SENSEI AND US LITERATURE CLUB MEMBERS.
IN THAT CASE, RATHER THAN DELIVERING IT TO THE FACULTY ROOM AND MAKING A BIG DEAL OUT OF IT,
ISN'T IDENTIFYING THE OWNER AND SUBTLY RETURNING IT...
...WHAT TRUE GENTLEMEN WOULD DO?
HE'S RIGHT!

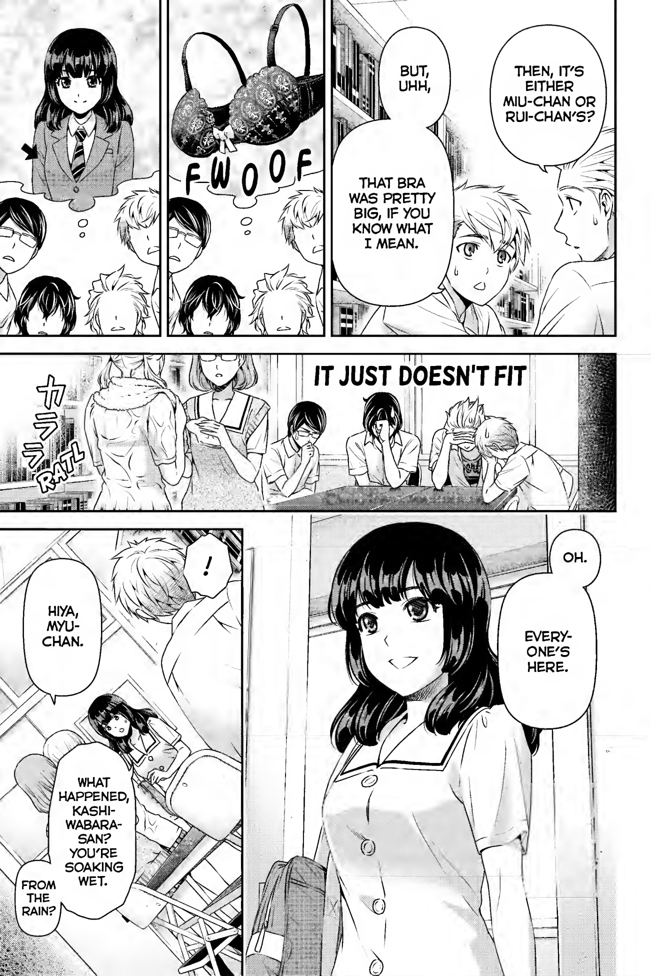

SO, BETWEEN RUI, MOMO, ASHIHARA-SAN, AND KABASAWA-SAN, WHOSE COULD IT BE?
WHY WOULD SOMEONE TAKE IT OFF AT SCHOOL IN THE FIRST PLACE?
OH.
MOMO-SEMPAI DID CHANGE HERE BEFORE AFTER HER UNIFORM GOT DIRTY...
THEN MAYBE IT'S MOMO-CHAN'S.
MOMO-SEMPAI ALWAYS WEARS A LIGHT PERFUME, DOESN'T SHE?
IN THAT CASE, PERHAPS WE CAN NARROW IT DOWN USING *THAT* METHOD.
DON'T TELL ME...
ARE YOU SERIOUS?!
I AM... WHAT OTHER OPTION DO WE HAVE?
MADNESS...
TO THINK THAT A FIRST-YEAR WOULD PROPOSE SOMETHING SO TABOO...!
SNIFF THE BRA.
FOR REAL?!
SACRIFICES MUST BE MADE.
AREN'T YOU JUST A CLOSET PERVERT?
I WON'T DENY THAT.
WELL, THEN...
SNIFF
SNIFF

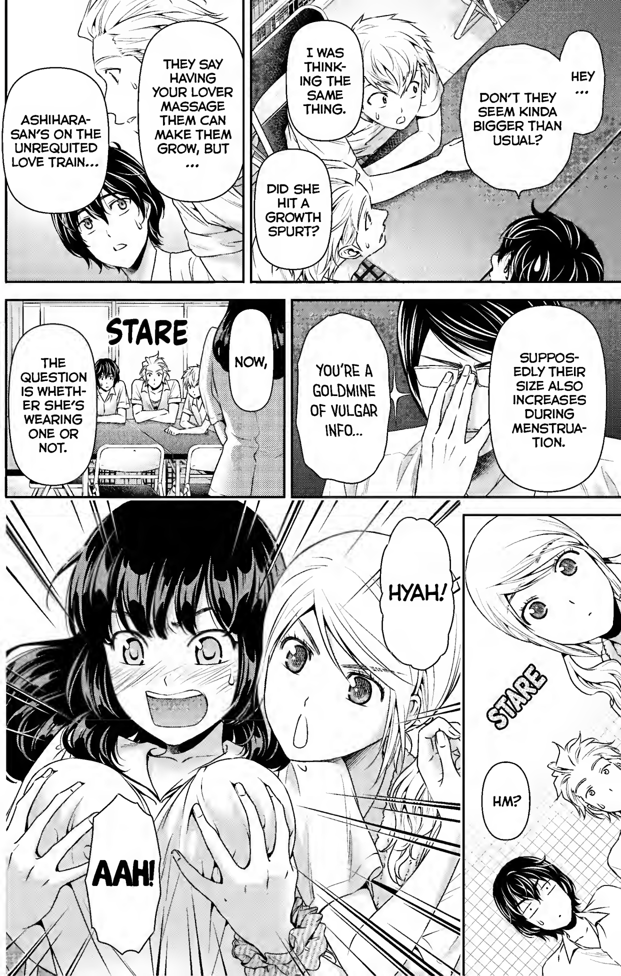

IIIT SMELLS NIIICE.
BUT IT DOESN'T SMELL LIKE MOMO-CHAN'S PERFUME.
MORE LIKE FABRIC SOFTENER...
THE OWNER'S SCENT MIGHT HAVE WORN OFF IF IT'S BEEN SOME TIME SINCE THEY TOOK IT OFF.
THEN WHOSE COULD IT–
カラ RATTL ラッ
HELLOOO.
OH, YOU GUYS ARE ALREADY HERE.
Y- YEAH! HOMEROOM LET OUT EARLY.
HIDE IT!
HURRY!
HM?
WHAT WERE YOU GUYS DOING?
OH, WELL...
HEY! WHY ME?!
BECAUSE YOU'RE THE ONLY NON-VIRGIN HERE!

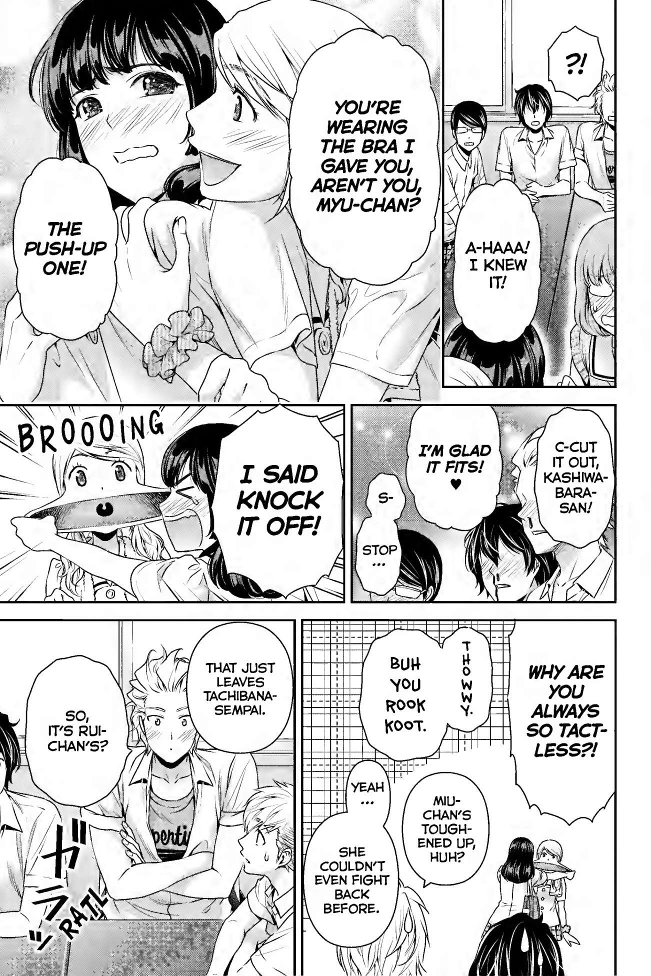

NOTHING?
WE WERE MERELY DISCUSSING LITERATURE.
YEAH? SOUNDS FUN.
SHIBASAKI-KUN, I BELIEVE THE INTERPRETATION THAT THE BUG IN "THE METAMORPHOSIS" IS IN FACT A METAPHOR FOR NEETS IS...
MIND IF I CLOSE THE WINDOW? IT'S STARTING TO RAIN.
OH,
SURE.
WHOOSH
FL
AP
AAH!

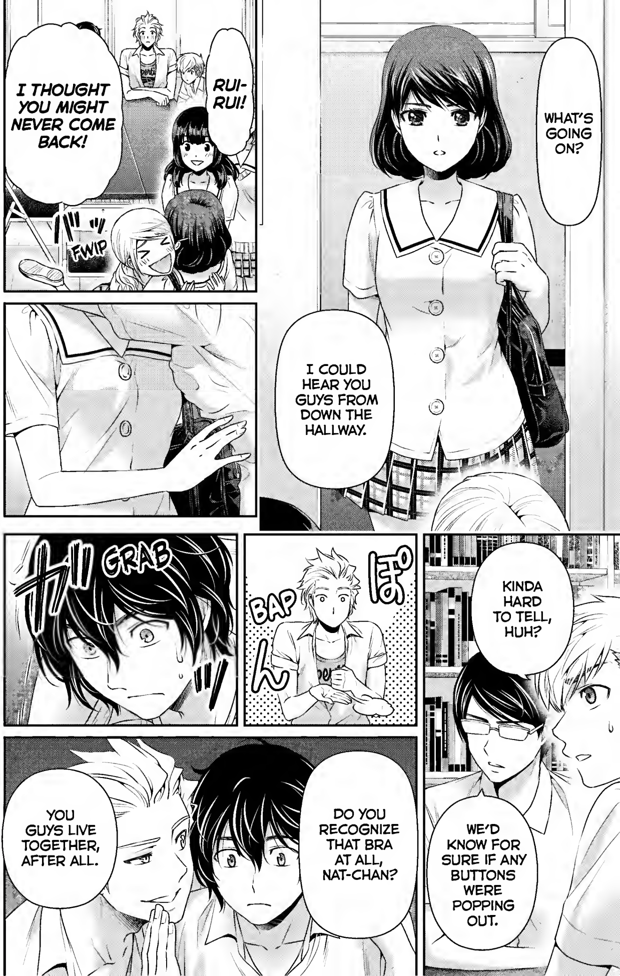

WHITE!
FWIP
FWIP
DID YOU SEE THAT? THEY WERE WHITE.
THEY DON'T MATCH THE BRA.
Y'MEAN IT'S NOT FUMIN'S?
WELL, BRAS AND PANTIES ARE TYPICALLY SOLD AS A SET, AREN'T THEY?
THAT'S TRUE.
THEN IT'S PROBABLY MOMO'S?
HYAAAAH!
ガラッ
RATL

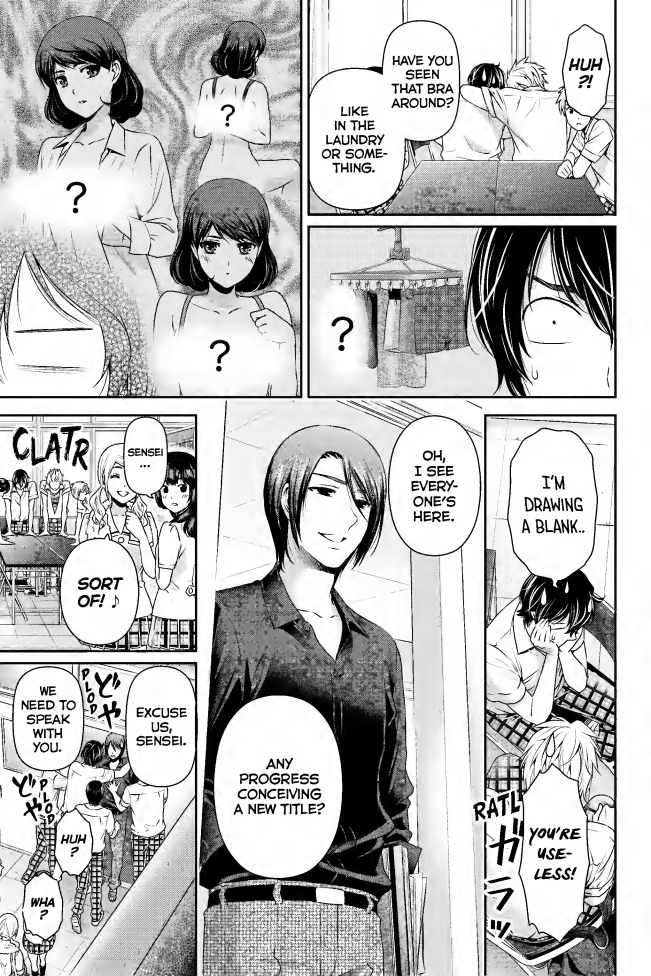

I GOT DRENCHED!
I WAS ON CLEANING DUTY IN THE COURTYARD TODAY,
WHEN IT STARTED POURING OUT OF NOWHERE! TALK ABOUT BAD LUCK.
K-KASHIWABARA-SEMPAI, IT'S SHOWING THROUGH...
I KNOW, RIGHT?
DOES ANYONE HAVE A HAIRDRYER BY CHANCE?
GUESS NOT...
I HAVE A TOWEL YOU CAN USE...
FWIP
REALLY? YOU'RE A LIFESAVER.
THAT LIGHT BLUE MASS SHOWING THROUGH HER SHIRT IS UNDOUBTEDLY A BRA, RIGHT?
YEAH...
THERE GOES OUR MOST LIKELY SUSPECT...

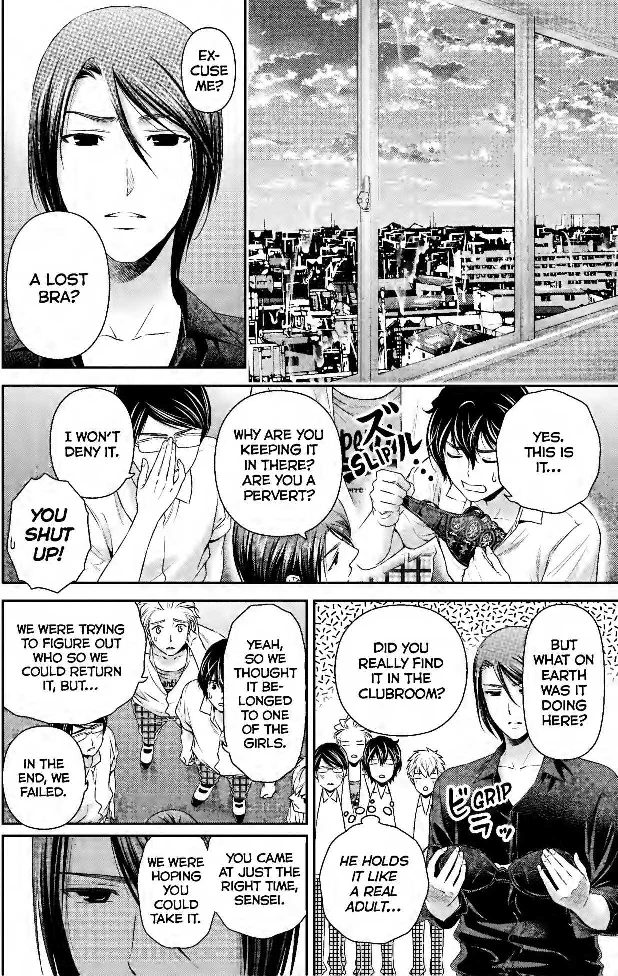

THEN, IT'S EITHER MIU-CHAN OR RUI-CHAN'S?
BUT, UHH,
THAT BRA WAS PRETTY BIG, IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.
FWOOF
IT JUST DOESN'T FIT
カララ
RATL
OH.
EVERYONE'S HERE.
!
HIYA, MYU-CHAN.
WHAT HAPPENED, KASHIWABARA-SAN? YOU'RE SOAKING WET.
FROM THE RAIN?

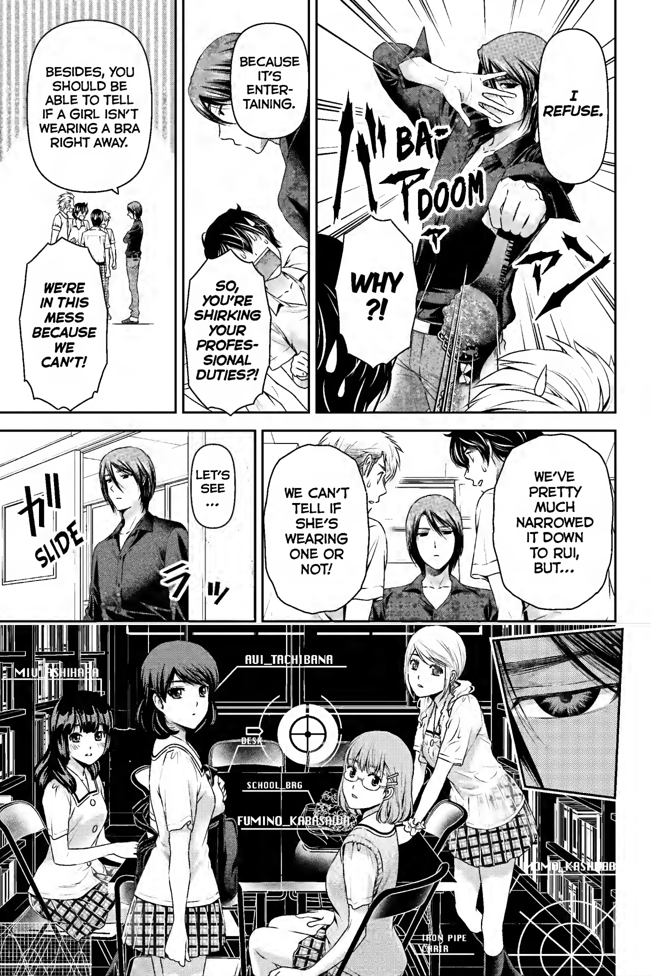

HEY ...
DON'T THEY SEEM KINDA BIGGER THAN USUAL?
I WAS THINKING THE SAME THING.
DID SHE HIT A GROWTH SPURT?
THEY SAY HAVING YOUR LOVER MASSAGE THEM CAN MAKE THEM GROW, BUT ...
ASHIHARA-SAN'S ON THE UNREQUITED LOVE TRAIN...
SUPPOSEDLY THEIR SIZE ALSO INCREASES DURING MENSTRUATION.
YOU'RE A GOLDMINE OF VULGAR INFO...
NOW,
THE QUESTION IS WHETHER SHE'S WEARING ONE OR NOT.
STARE
STARE
HM?
HYAH!
AAH!

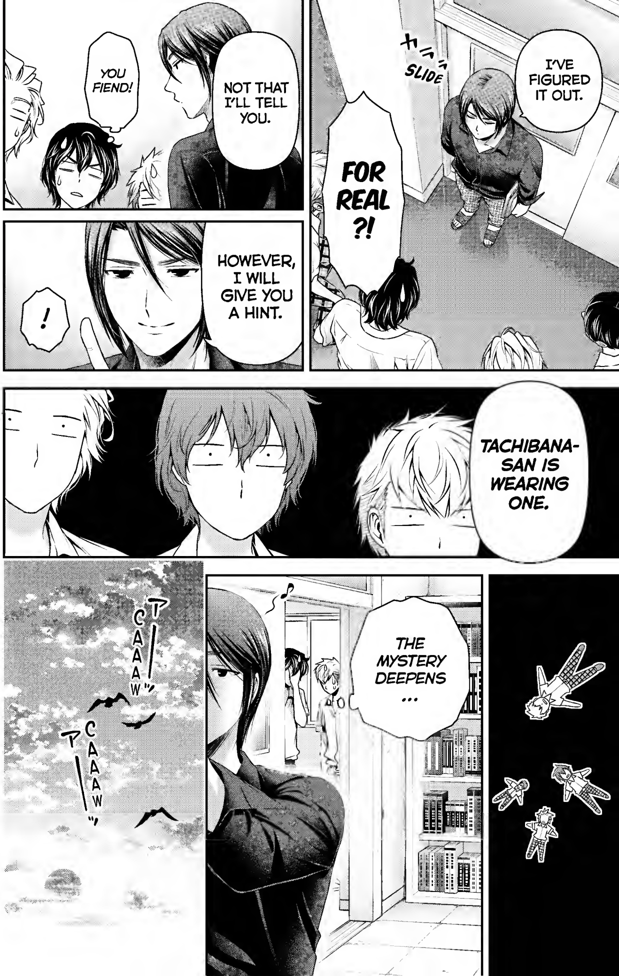

?!
A-HAAA! I KNEW IT!
YOU'RE WEARING THE BRA I GAVE YOU, AREN'T YOU, MYU-CHAN?
THE PUSH-UP ONE!
C-CUT IT OUT, KASHIWABARA-SAN!
I'M GLAD IT FITS! ♥
S-
STOP ...
I SAID KNOCK IT OFF!
BROOOING
WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS SO TACTLESS?!
THOWWY.
BUH YOU ROOK KOOT.
MIU-CHAN'S TOUGHENED UP, HUH?
YEAH ...
SHE COULDN'T EVEN FIGHT BACK BEFORE.
THAT JUST LEAVES TACHIBANA-SEMPAI.
SO, IT'S RUI-CHAN'S?
ガラッ
RATL

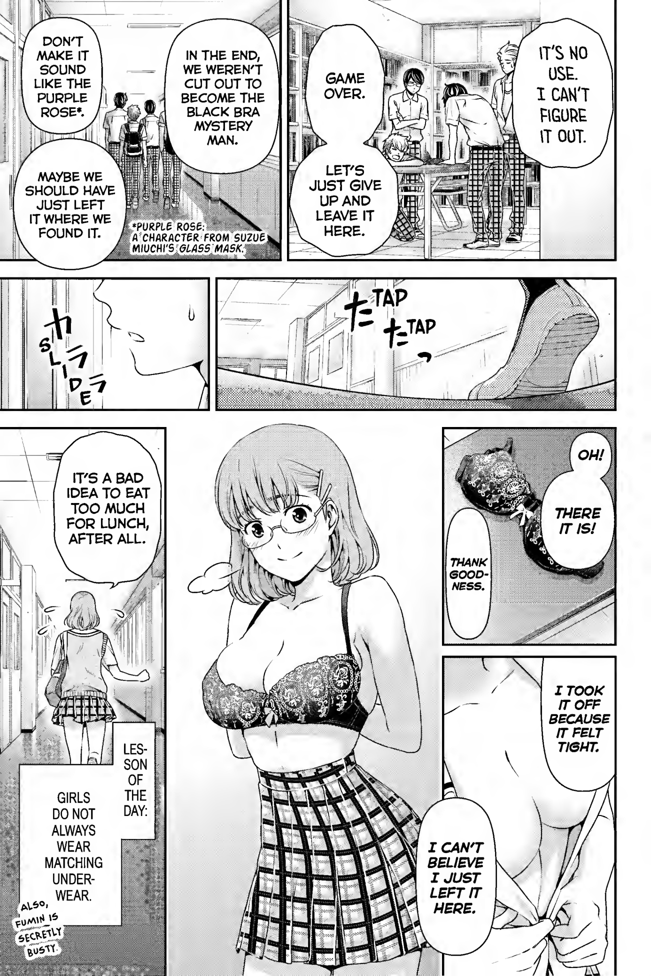

WHAT'S GOING ON?
I COULD HEAR YOU GUYS FROM DOWN THE HALLWAY.
RUI-RUI!
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT NEVER COME BACK!
バッ
FWIP
KINDA HARD TO TELL, HUH?
WE'D KNOW FOR SURE IF ANY BUTTONS WERE POPPING OUT.
ぽん
BAP
ガッ
GRAB
DO YOU RECOGNIZE THAT BRA AT ALL, NAT-CHAN?
YOU GUYS LIVE TOGETHER, AFTER ALL.


HUH ?!
HAVE YOU SEEN THAT BRA AROUND?
LIKE IN THE LAUNDRY OR SOME-THING.
?
?
?
?
I'M DRAWING A BLANK..
RATL ガラッ
YOU'RE USE-LESS!
OH, I SEE EVERY-ONE'S HERE.
ANY PROGRESS CONCEIVING A NEW TITLE?
CLATR
SENSEI ...
SORT OF! ♪
EXCUSE US, SENSEI.
PLOD どや
WE NEED TO SPEAK WITH YOU.
PLOD どや
HUH ?
WHA ?


EX-CUSE ME?
A LOST BRA?
YES. THIS IS IT...
SLIP
WHY ARE YOU KEEPING IT IN THERE? ARE YOU A PERVERT?
I WON'T DENY IT.
YOU SHUT UP!
BUT WHAT ON EARTH WAS IT DOING HERE?
DID YOU REALLY FIND IT IN THE CLUBROOM?
YEAH, SO WE THOUGHT IT BELONGED TO ONE OF THE GIRLS.
WE WERE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHO SO WE COULD RETURN IT, BUT...
IN THE END, WE FAILED.
GRIP
HE HOLDS IT LIKE A REAL ADULT...
YOU CAME AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME, SENSEI.
WE WERE HOPING YOU COULD TAKE IT.

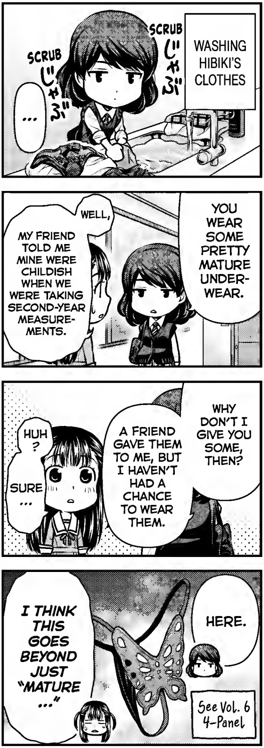

I REFUSE.
BA-DOOM
WHY ?!
BECAUSE IT'S ENTERTAINING.
SO, YOU'RE SHIRKING YOUR PROFESSIONAL DUTIES?!
BESIDES, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO TELL IF A GIRL ISN'T WEARING A BRA RIGHT AWAY.
WE'RE IN THIS MESS BECAUSE WE CAN'T!
WE'VE PRETTY MUCH NARROWED IT DOWN TO RUI, BUT...
WE CAN'T TELL IF SHE'S WEARING ONE OR NOT!
LET'S SEE...
SLIDE
RUI_TACHIBANA
MIU_ASHIHARA
DESK
SCHOOL_BAG
FUMINO_KABASAWA
MOMO_KASHIWAB
IRON PIPE CHAIR


SLIDE
I'VE FIGURED IT OUT.
FOR REAL?!
NOT THAT I'LL TELL YOU.
YOU FIEND!
HOWEVER, I WILL GIVE YOU A HINT.
!
TACHIBANA-SAN IS WEARING ONE.
THE MYSTERY DEEPENS...
CAAAAW
CAAAAW

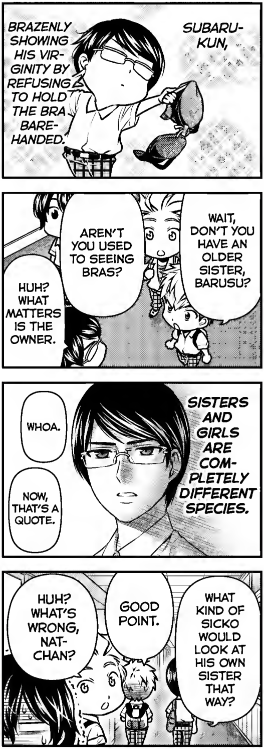

IT'S NO USE. I CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT.
GAME OVER.
LET'S JUST GIVE UP AND LEAVE IT HERE.
IN THE END, WE WEREN'T CUT OUT TO BECOME THE BLACK BRA MYSTERY MAN.
DON'T MAKE IT SOUND LIKE THE PURPLE ROSE*.
MAYBE WE SHOULD HAVE JUST LEFT IT WHERE WE FOUND IT.
*PURPLE ROSE: A CHARACTER FROM SUZUE MIUCHI'S GLASS MASK.
たTAP たTAP
カラ SLIDE
OH! THERE IT IS!
THANK GOODNESS.
I TOOK IT OFF BECAUSE IT FELT TIGHT.
I CAN'T BELIEVE I JUST LEFT IT HERE.
IT'S A BAD IDEA TO EAT TOO MUCH FOR LUNCH, AFTER ALL.
LESSON OF THE DAY:
GIRLS DO NOT ALWAYS WEAR MATCHING UNDERWEAR.
ALSO, FUMIN IS SECRETLY BUSTY.

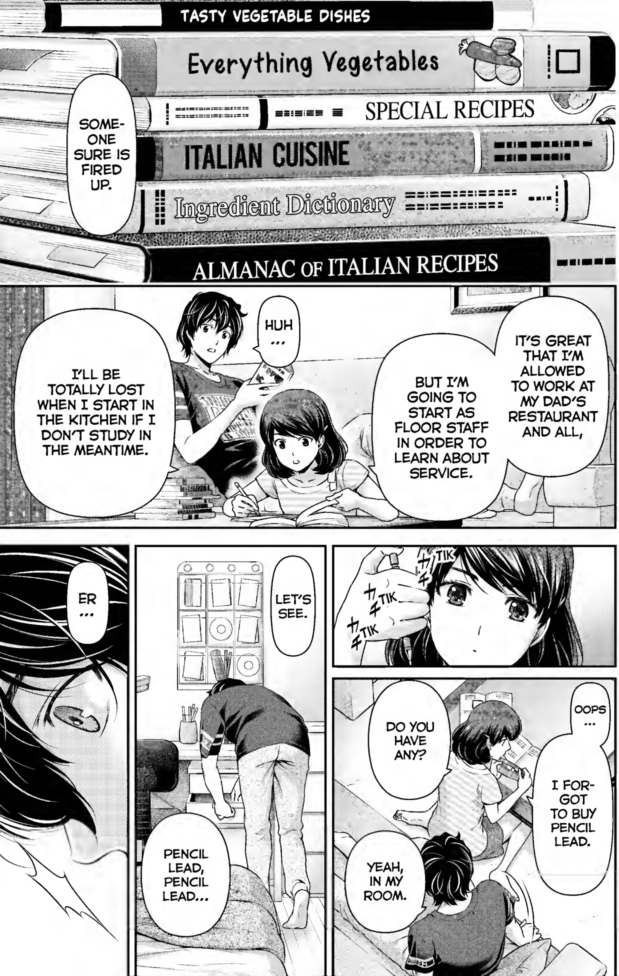
DOMEGIRL 4-PANEL THEATER

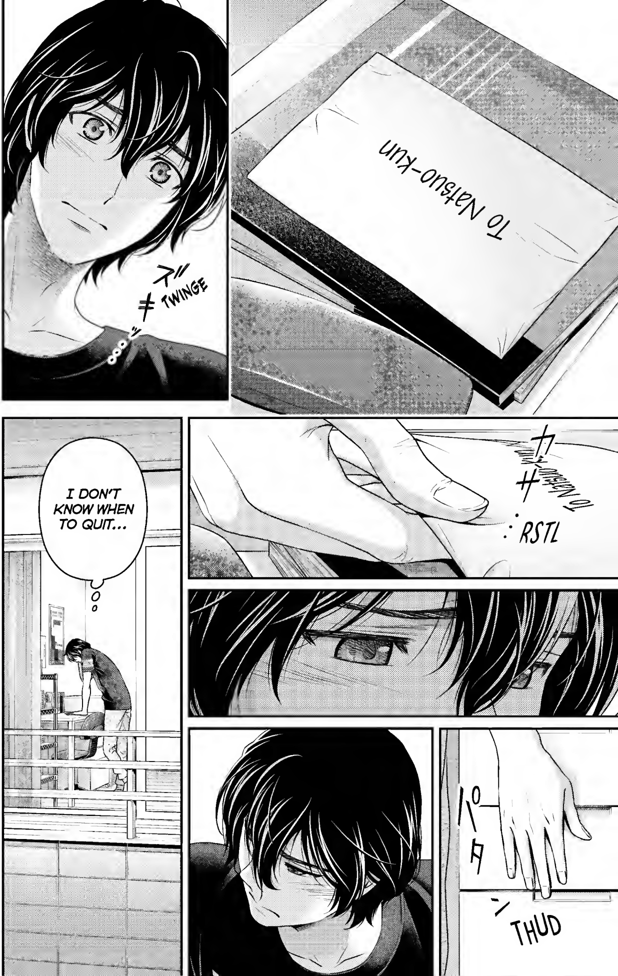
MATURE


WASHING HIBIKI'S CLOTHES
SCRUB じゃぶ
SCRUB じゃぶ
...
YOU WEAR SOME PRETTY MATURE UNDERWEAR.
WELL,
MY FRIEND TOLD ME MINE WERE CHILDISH WHEN WE WERE TAKING SECOND-YEAR MEASUREMENTS.
WHY DON'T I GIVE YOU SOME, THEN?
A FRIEND GAVE THEM TO ME, BUT I HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO WEAR THEM.
HUH?
SURE...
HERE.
I THINK THIS GOES BEYOND JUST "MATURE..."
See Vol. 6 4-Panel

SIBLINGS

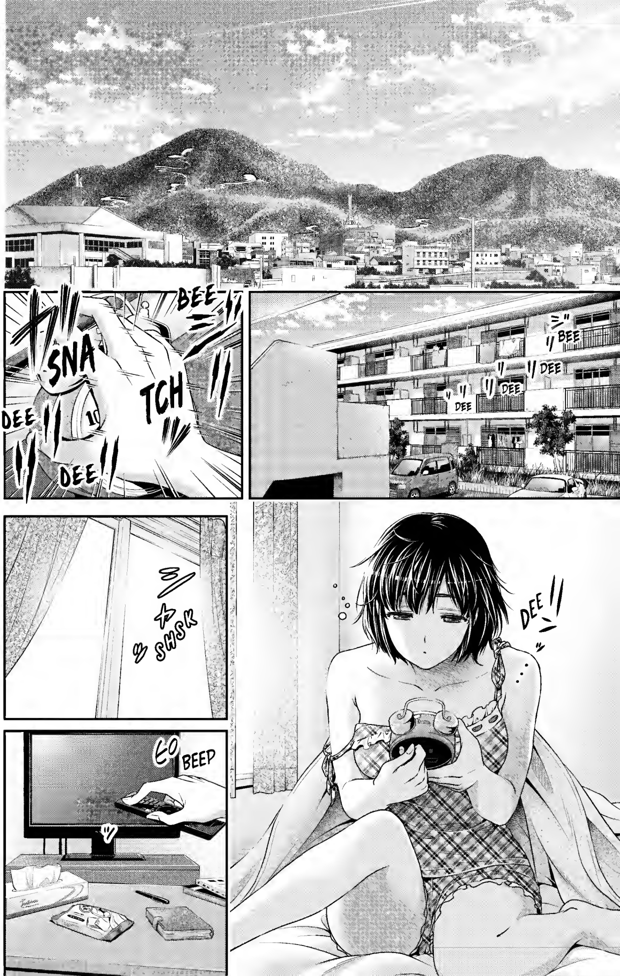

SUBARU-KUN,
BRAZENLY SHOWING HIS VIRGINITY BY REFUSING TO HOLD THE BRA BAREHANDED.
WAIT, DON'T YOU HAVE AN OLDER SISTER, BARUSU?
AREN'T YOU USED TO SEEING BRAS?
HUH? WHAT MATTERS IS THE OWNER.
SISTERS AND GIRLS ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT SPECIES.
WHOA.
NOW, THAT'S A QUOTE.
WHAT KIND OF SICKO WOULD LOOK AT HIS OWN SISTER THAT WAY?
GOOD POINT.
HUH? WHAT'S WRONG, NAT-CHAN?

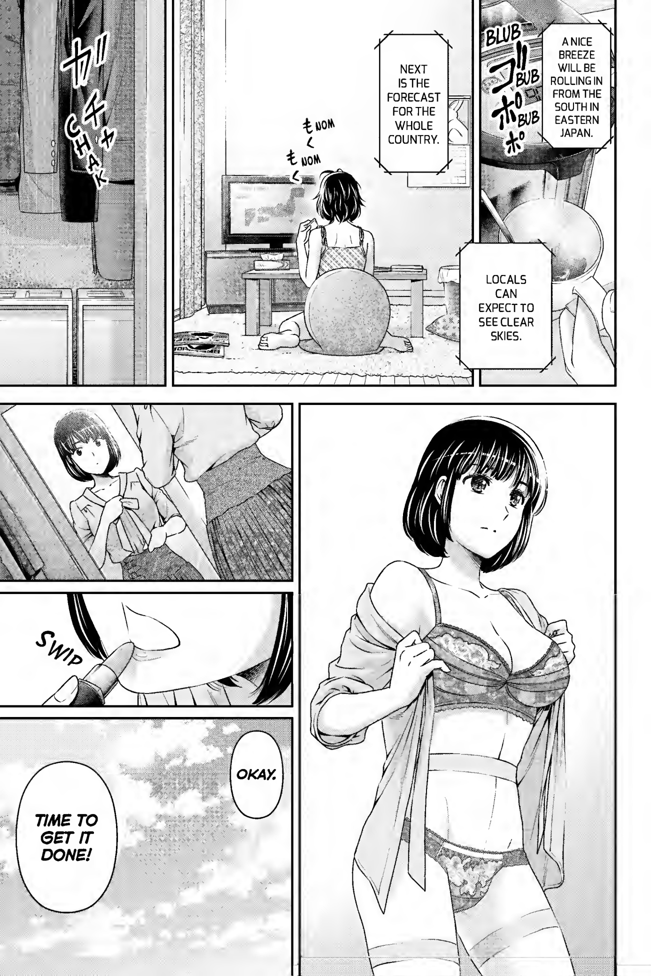

TASTY VEGETABLE DISHES
Everything Vegetables
SPECIAL RECIPES
ITALIAN CUISINE
Ingredient Dictionary
ALMANAC OF ITALIAN RECIPES
SOME-ONE SURE IS FIRED UP.
IT'S GREAT THAT I'M ALLOWED TO WORK AT MY DAD'S RESTAURANT AND ALL,
BUT I'M GOING TO START AS FLOOR STAFF IN ORDER TO LEARN ABOUT SERVICE.
HUH...
I'LL BE TOTALLY LOST WHEN I START IN THE KITCHEN IF I DON'T STUDY IN THE MEANTIME.
カチ TIK
カチ TIK
カチ TIK
OOPS...
I FORGOT TO BUY PENCIL LEAD.
DO YOU HAVE ANY?
YEAH, IN MY ROOM.
LET'S SEE.
PENCIL LEAD, PENCIL LEAD...
ER...

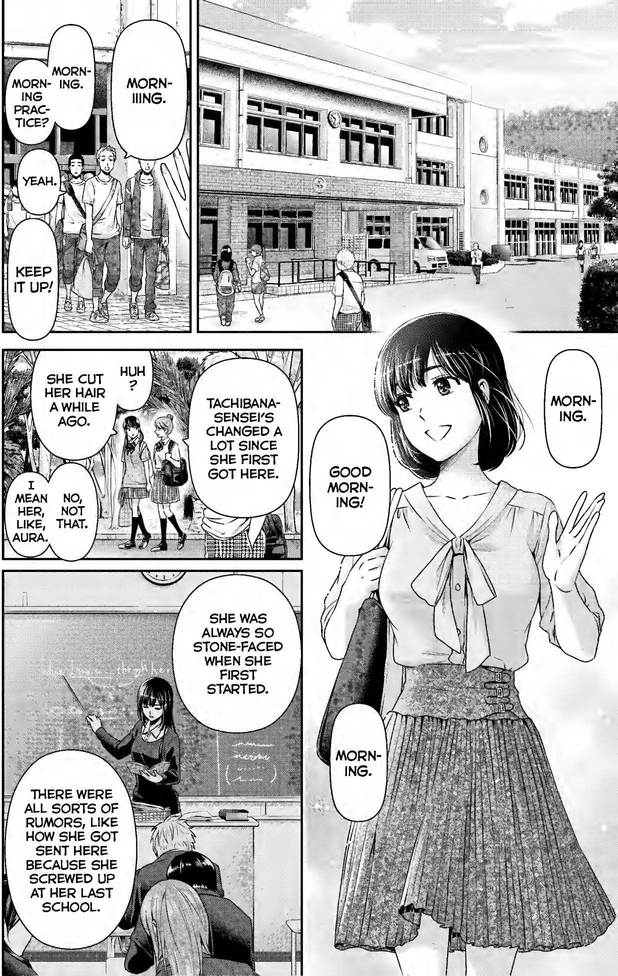

To Natsuo-kun
ズキ
TWINGE
...
カサ
RSTL
To Natsuo-kun
I DON'T KNOW WHEN TO QUIT...
パタン
THUD

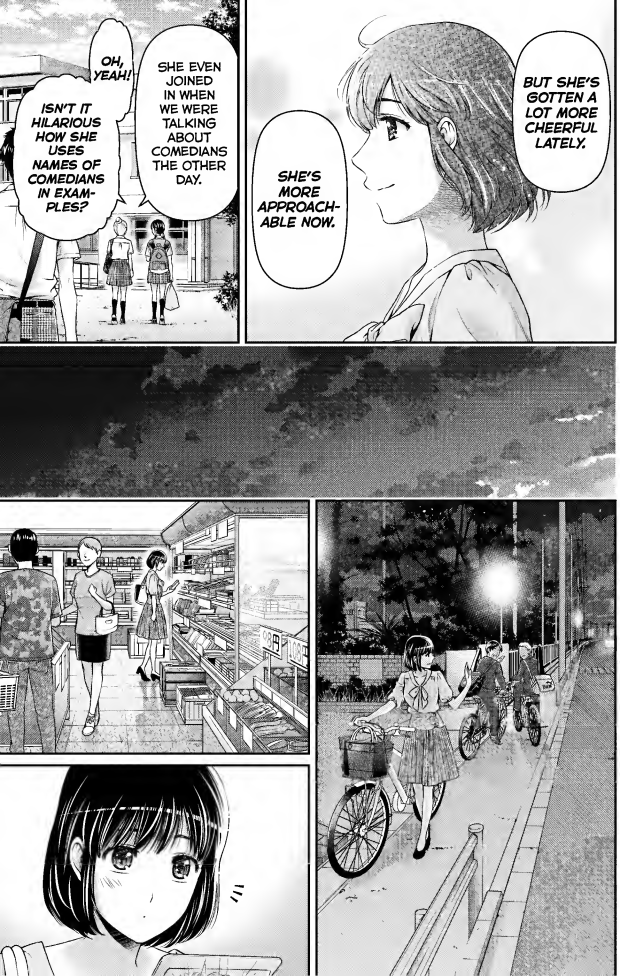
CHAPTER 92: FAR APART

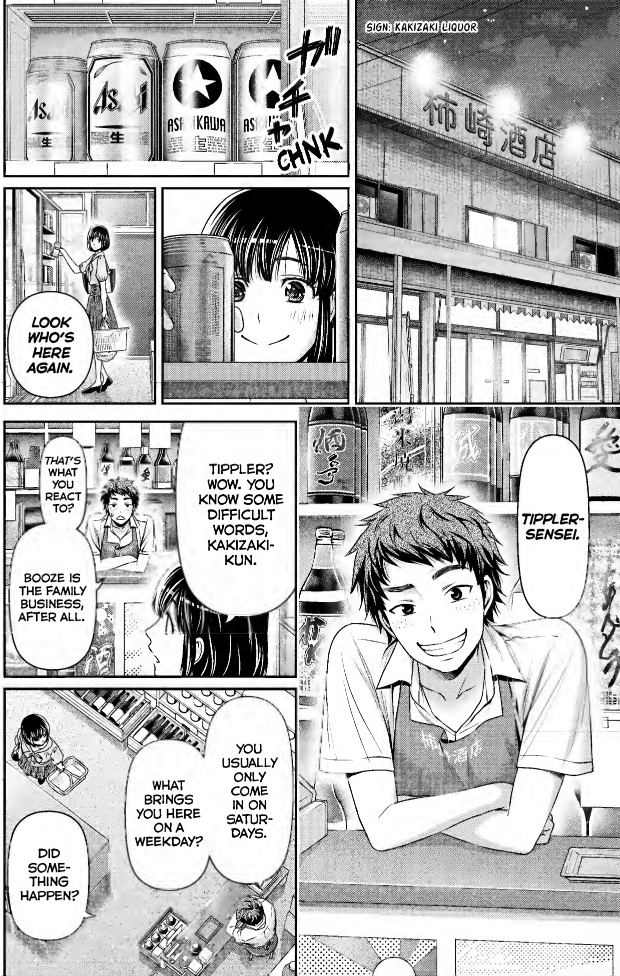
high school

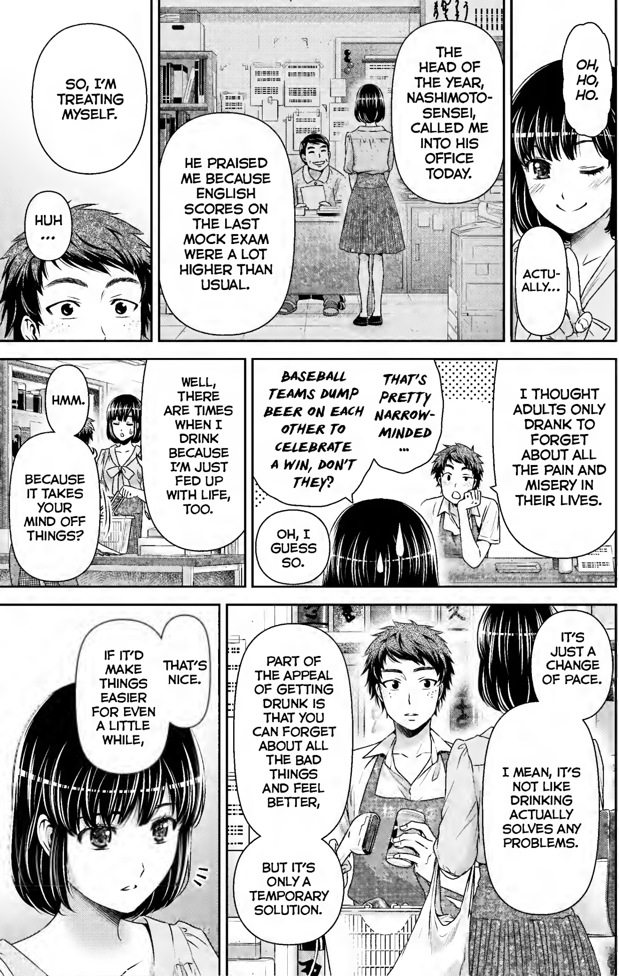

ジ BEE
リ DEE
リ DEE
リ DEE
BEE ジ
ガ SNATCH
DEE
DEE
DEE
…
シャッ SHSK
ピッ BEEP

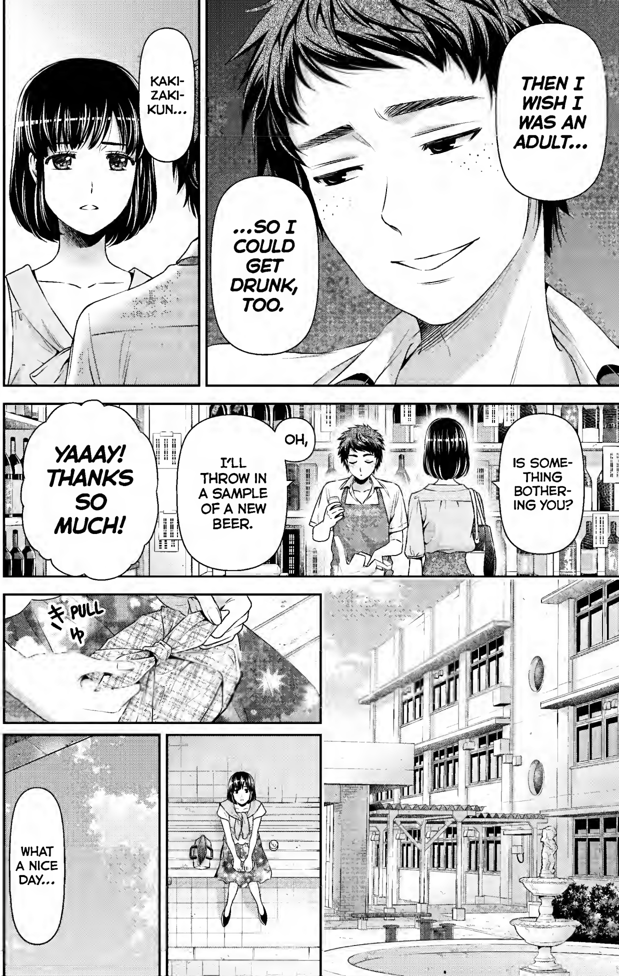

ゴボポポ
BLUB BUB BUB
A NICE BREEZE WILL BE ROLLING IN FROM THE SOUTH IN EASTERN JAPAN.
LOCALS CAN EXPECT TO SEE CLEAR SKIES.
NEXT IS THE FORECAST FOR THE WHOLE COUNTRY.
もく NOM
もく NOM
カチャ
CHAK
SWIP
OKAY.
TIME TO GET IT DONE!

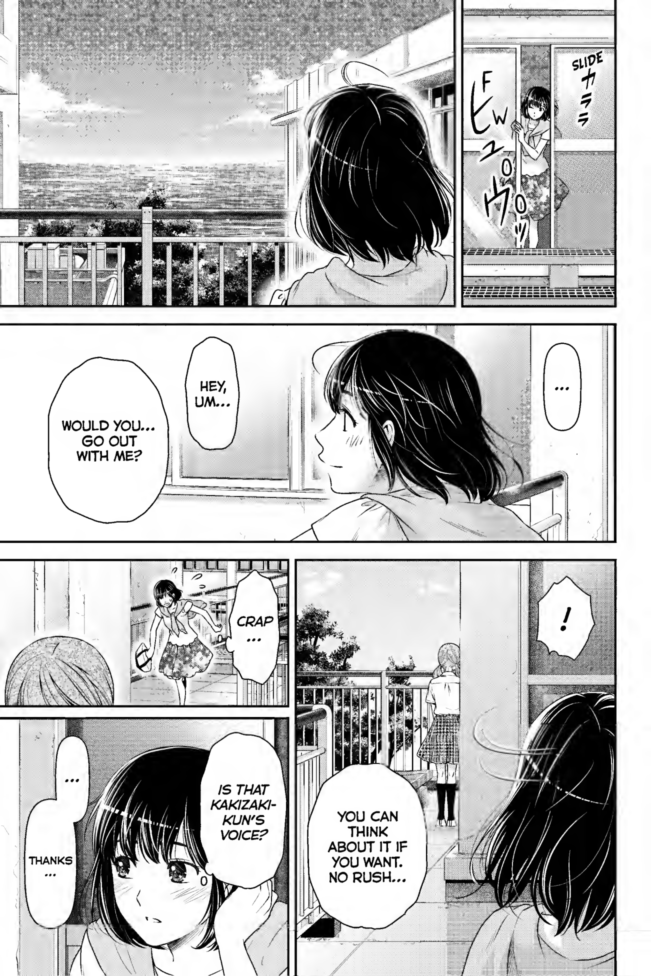

MORNIIING.
MORNING.
MORNING PRACTICE?
YEAH.
KEEP IT UP!
MORNING.
GOOD MORNING!
MORNING.
TACHIBANA-SENSEI'S CHANGED A LOT SINCE SHE FIRST GOT HERE.
HUH?
SHE CUT HER HAIR A WHILE AGO.
NO, NOT THAT.
I MEAN HER, LIKE, AURA.
SHE WAS ALWAYS SO STONE-FACED WHEN SHE FIRST STARTED.
THERE WERE ALL SORTS OF RUMORS, LIKE HOW SHE GOT SENT HERE BECAUSE SHE SCREWED UP AT HER LAST SCHOOL.

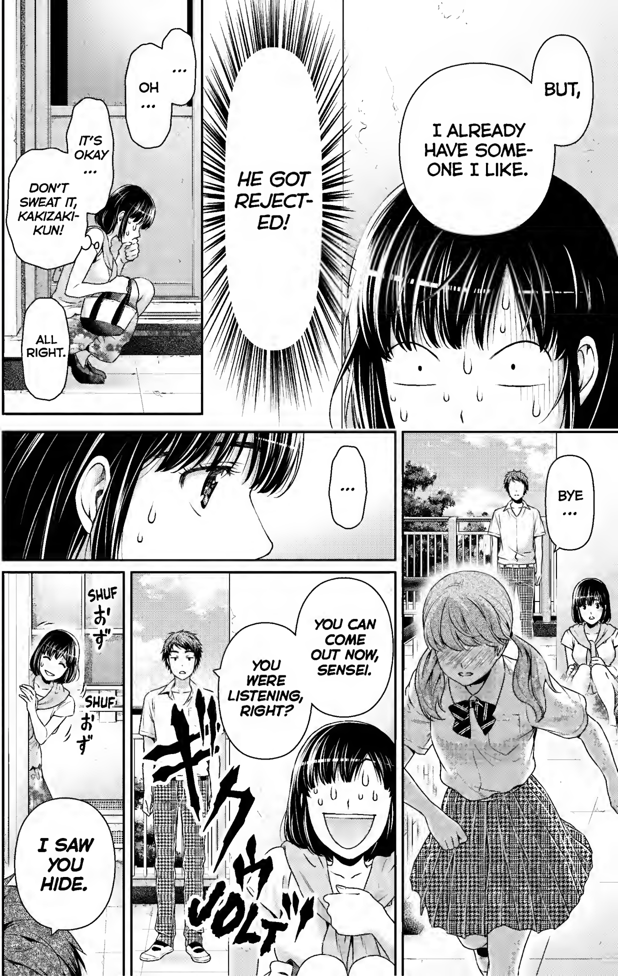

BUT SHE'S GOTTEN A LOT MORE CHEERFUL LATELY.
SHE'S MORE APPROACHABLE NOW.
SHE EVEN JOINED IN WHEN WE WERE TALKING ABOUT COMEDIANS THE OTHER DAY.
OH, YEAH!
ISN'T IT HILARIOUS HOW SHE USES NAMES OF COMEDIANS IN EXAMPLES?
98円
108円

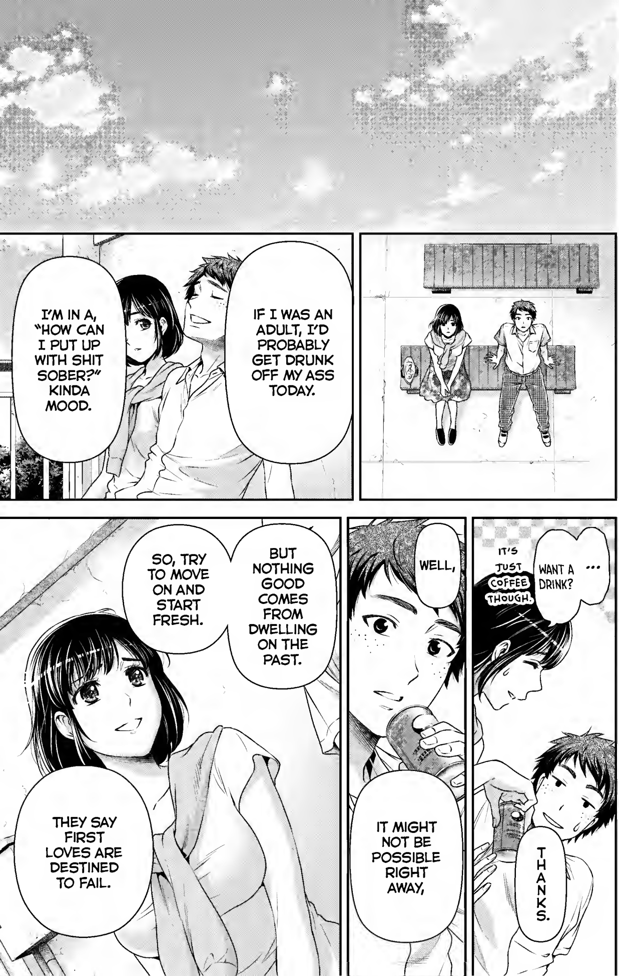

SIGN: KAKIZAKI LIQUOR
柿崎酒店
ガチャ
CHNK
Asahi
ASAHIKAWA
生
LOOK WHO'S HERE AGAIN.
TIPPLER-SENSEI.
柿崎酒店
TIPPLER? WOW. YOU KNOW SOME DIFFICULT WORDS, KAKIZAKI-KUN.
THAT'S WHAT YOU REACT TO?
BOOZE IS THE FAMILY BUSINESS, AFTER ALL.
YOU USUALLY ONLY COME IN ON SATURDAYS.
WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE ON A WEEKDAY?
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?

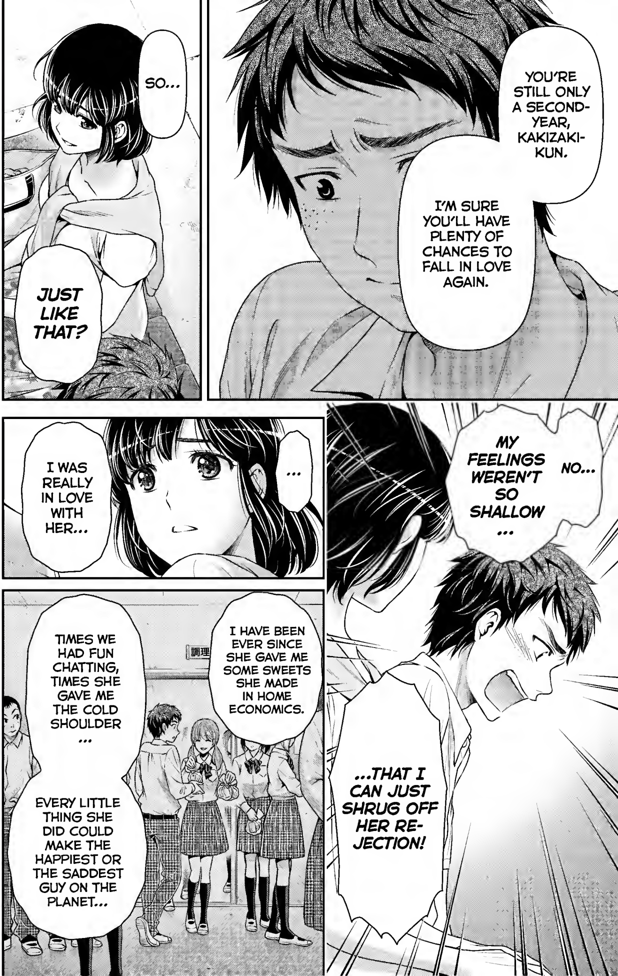

OH, HO, HO.
ACTUALLY...
THE HEAD OF THE YEAR, NASHIMOTO-SENSEI, CALLED ME INTO HIS OFFICE TODAY.
HE PRAISED ME BECAUSE ENGLISH SCORES ON THE LAST MOCK EXAM WERE A LOT HIGHER THAN USUAL.
SO, I'M TREATING MYSELF.
HUH...
I THOUGHT ADULTS ONLY DRANK TO FORGET ABOUT ALL THE PAIN AND MISERY IN THEIR LIVES.
THAT'S PRETTY NARROW-MINDED...
BASEBALL TEAMS DUMP BEER ON EACH OTHER TO CELEBRATE A WIN, DON'T THEY?
OH, I GUESS SO.
WELL, THERE ARE TIMES WHEN I DRINK BECAUSE I'M JUST FED UP WITH LIFE, TOO.
HMM.
BECAUSE IT TAKES YOUR MIND OFF THINGS?
IT'S JUST A CHANGE OF PACE.
I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE DRINKING ACTUALLY SOLVES ANY PROBLEMS.
PART OF THE APPEAL OF GETTING DRUNK IS THAT YOU CAN FORGET ABOUT ALL THE BAD THINGS AND FEEL BETTER,
BUT IT'S ONLY A TEMPORARY SOLUTION.
THAT'S NICE.
IF IT'D MAKE THINGS EASIER FOR EVEN A LITTLE WHILE,

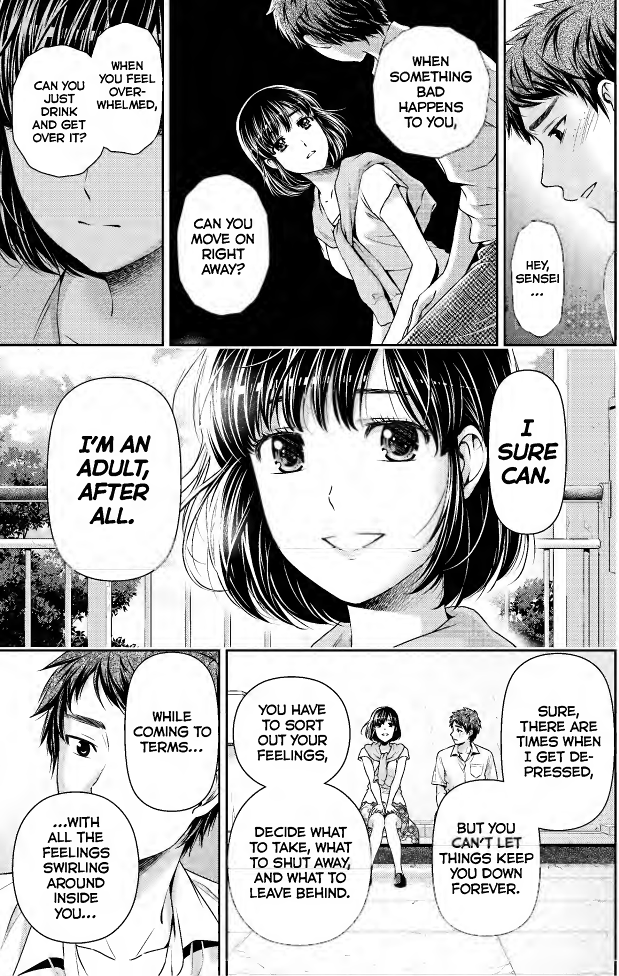

THEN I WISH I WAS AN ADULT...
...SO I COULD GET DRUNK, TOO.
KAKIZAKI-KUN...
IS SOMETHING BOTHERING YOU?
OH,
I'LL THROW IN A SAMPLE OF A NEW BEER.
YAAAY! THANKS SO MUCH!
キゅ
PULL
WHAT A NICE DAY...

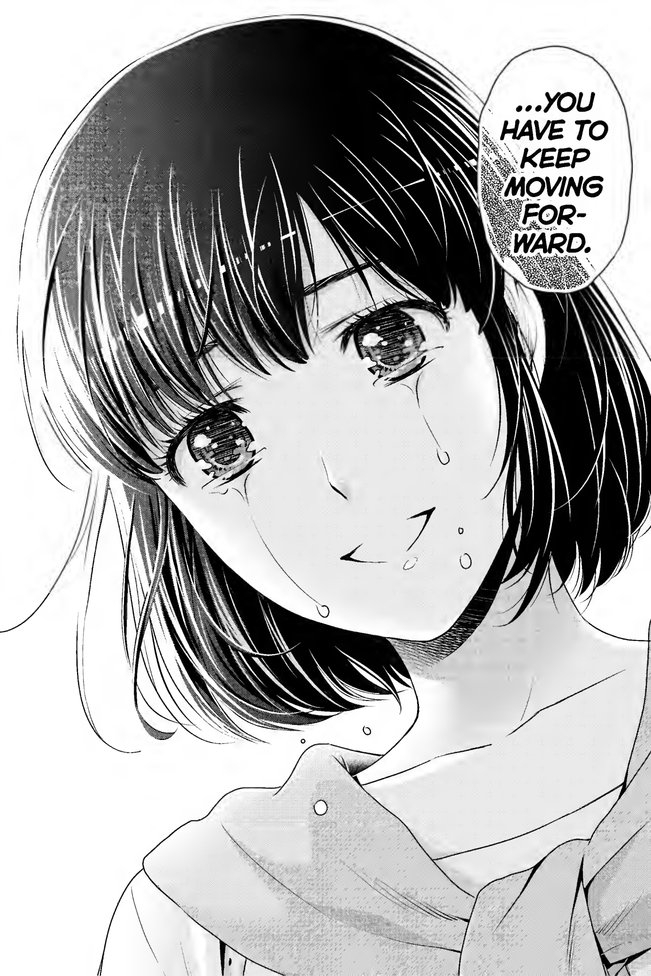

SLIDE
カララ
FWOOO
ヒュオォッ
...
HEY, UM...
WOULD YOU... GO OUT WITH ME?
!
YOU CAN THINK ABOUT IT IF YOU WANT. NO RUSH...
CRAP ...
IS THAT KAKIZAKI-KUN'S VOICE?
...
THANKS ...

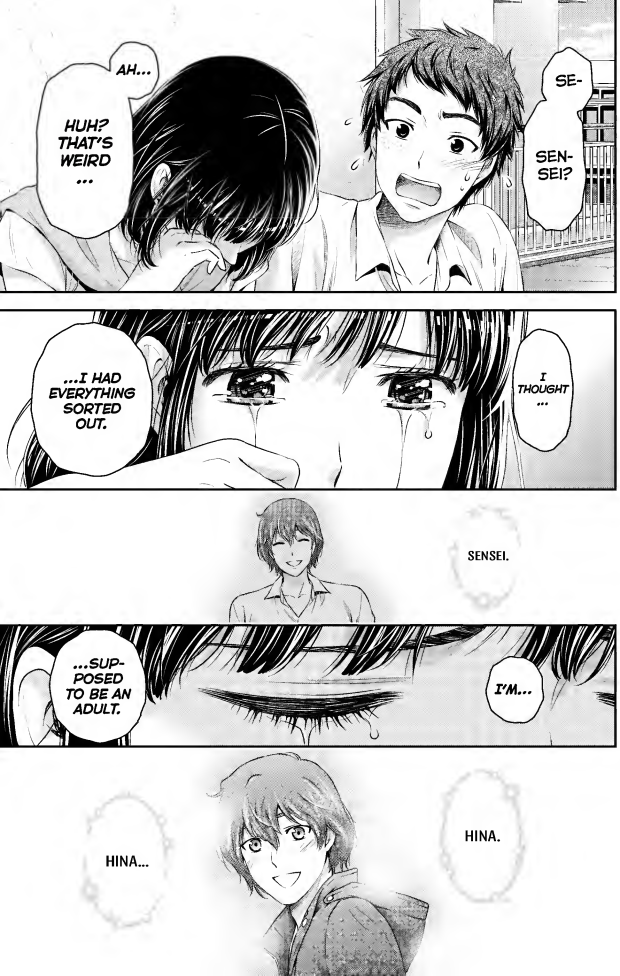

BUT,
I ALREADY HAVE SOMEONE I LIKE.
HE GOT REJECTED!
... OH ...
IT'S OKAY ... DON'T SWEAT IT, KAKIZAKI-KUN!
ALL RIGHT.
BYE ...
...
YOU CAN COME OUT NOW, SENSEI.
YOU WERE LISTENING, RIGHT?
ギクゥ JOLT
SHUF おず
SHUF おず
I SAW YOU HIDE.

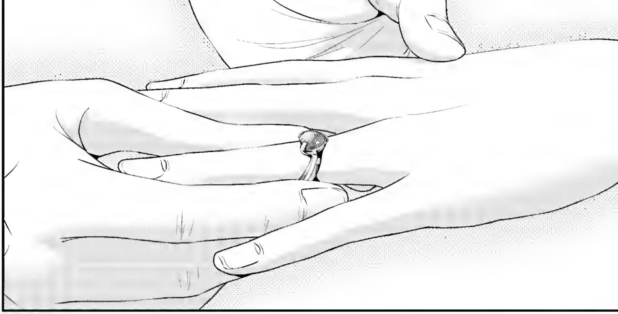

IF I WAS AN ADULT, I'D PROBABLY GET DRUNK OFF MY ASS TODAY.
I'M IN A, "HOW CAN I PUT UP WITH SHIT SOBER?" KINDA MOOD.
...
WANT A DRINK?
IT'S JUST COFFEE THOUGH.
THANKS.
WELL,
IT MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE RIGHT AWAY,
BUT NOTHING GOOD COMES FROM DWELLING ON THE PAST.
SO, TRY TO MOVE ON AND START FRESH.
THEY SAY FIRST LOVES ARE DESTINED TO FAIL.

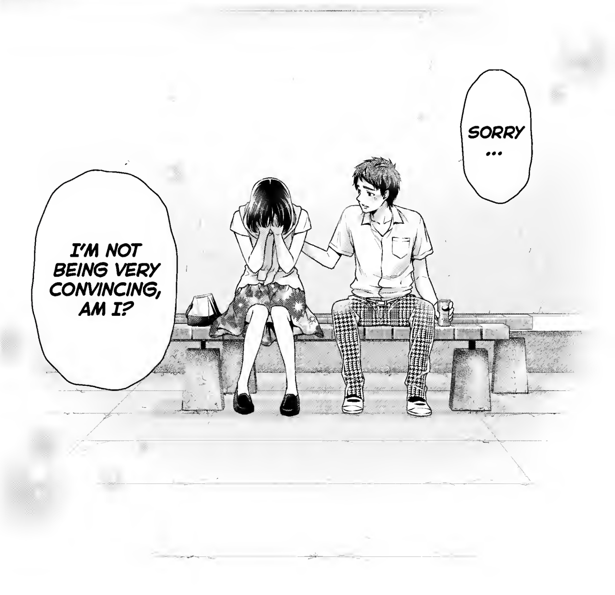

YOU'RE STILL ONLY A SECOND-YEAR, KAKIZAKI-KUN.
I'M SURE YOU'LL HAVE PLENTY OF CHANCES TO FALL IN LOVE AGAIN.
SO...
JUST LIKE THAT?
NO...
MY FEELINGS WEREN'T SO SHALLOW...
...THAT I CAN JUST SHRUG OFF HER RE-JECTION!
...
I WAS REALLY IN LOVE WITH HER...
I HAVE BEEN EVER SINCE SHE GAVE ME SOME SWEETS SHE MADE IN HOME ECONOMICS.
調理
TIMES WE HAD FUN CHATTING, TIMES SHE GAVE ME THE COLD SHOULDER...
EVERY LITTLE THING SHE DID COULD MAKE THE HAPPIEST OR THE SADDEST GUY ON THE PLANET...

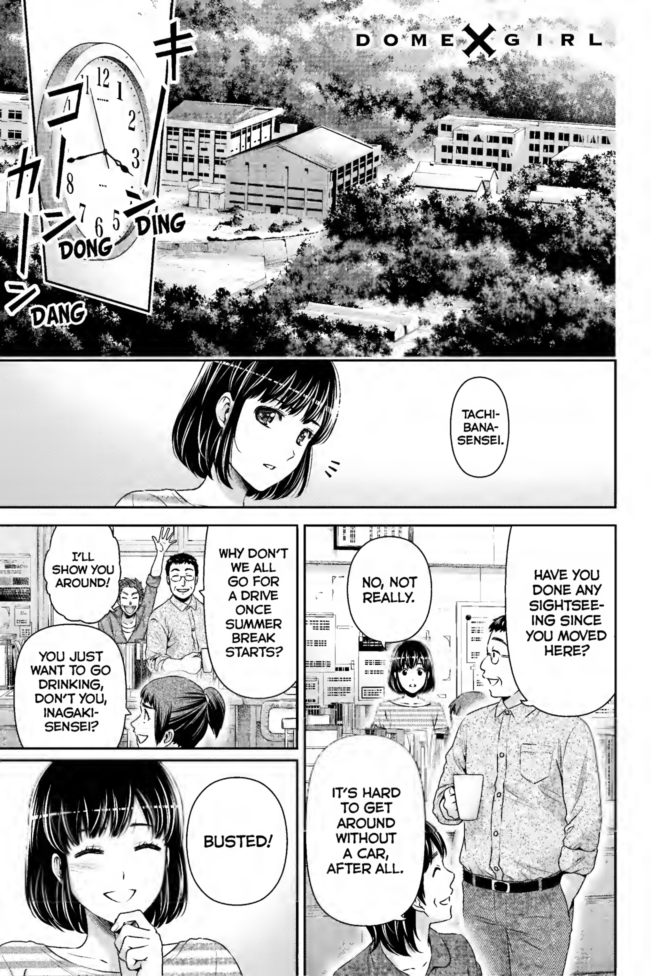

HEY, SENSEI...
WHEN SOMETHING BAD HAPPENS TO YOU,
CAN YOU MOVE ON RIGHT AWAY?
WHEN YOU FEEL OVERWHELMED,
CAN YOU JUST DRINK AND GET OVER IT?
I SURE CAN.
I'M AN ADULT, AFTER ALL.
SURE, THERE ARE TIMES WHEN I GET DEPRESSED,
BUT YOU CAN'T LET THINGS KEEP YOU DOWN FOREVER.
YOU HAVE TO SORT OUT YOUR FEELINGS,
DECIDE WHAT TO TAKE, WHAT TO SHUT AWAY, AND WHAT TO LEAVE BEHIND.
WHILE COMING TO TERMS...
...WITH ALL THE FEELINGS SWIRLING AROUND INSIDE YOU...


...YOU HAVE TO KEEP MOVING FORWARD.

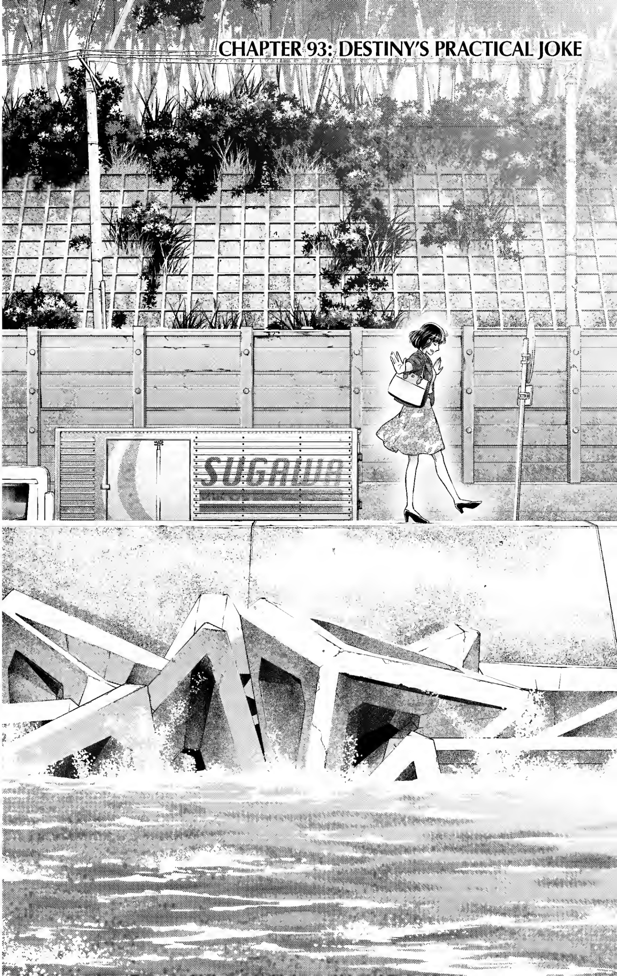

SE-
SEN-SEI?
AH...
HUH? THAT'S WEIRD...
I THOUGHT...
...I HAD EVERYTHING SORTED OUT.
SENSEI.
I'M...
...SUPPOSED TO BE AN ADULT.
HINA.
HINA...

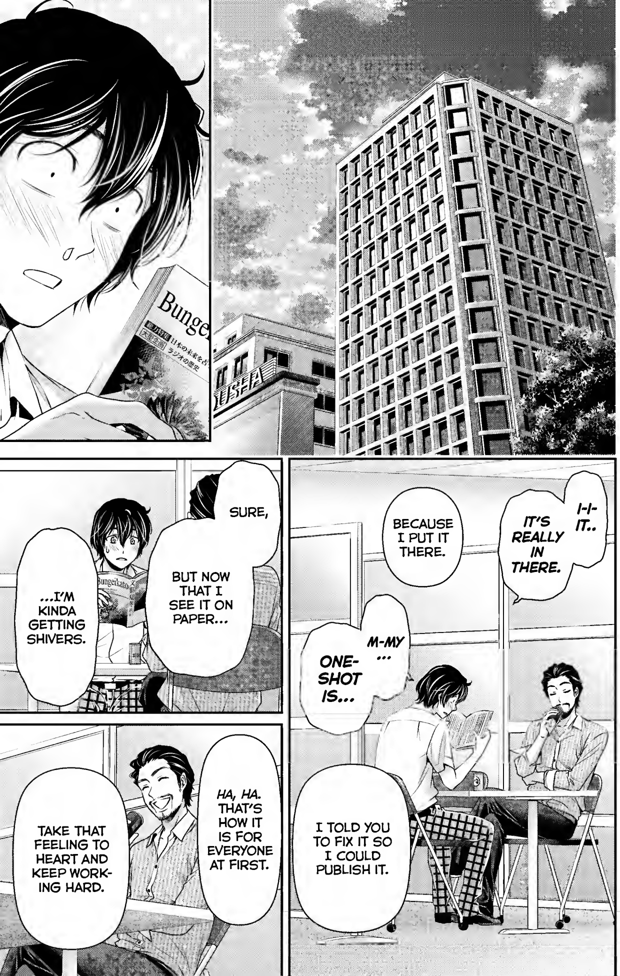


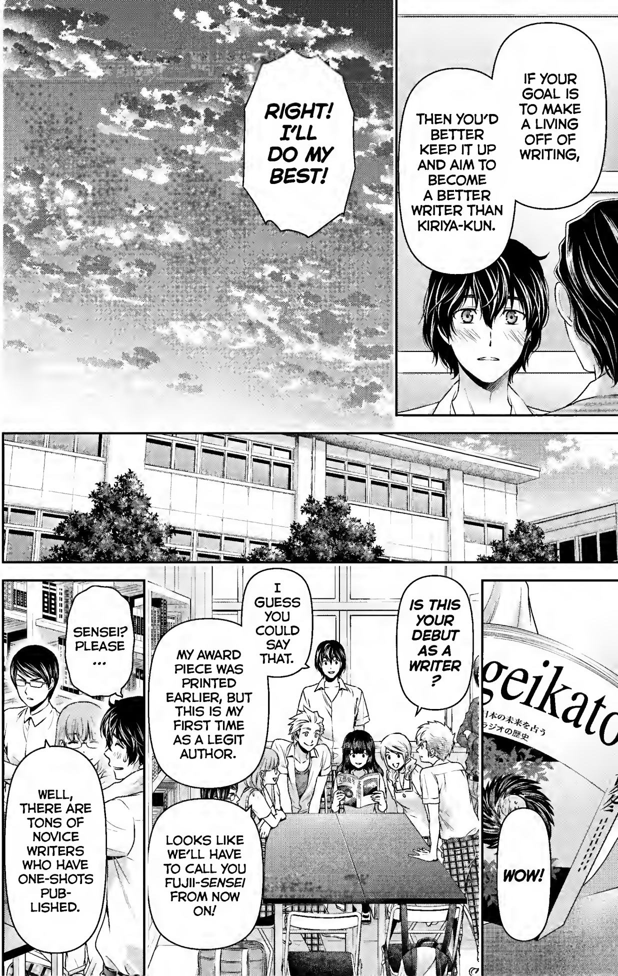

SORRY ...
I'M NOT BEING VERY CONVINCING, AM I?

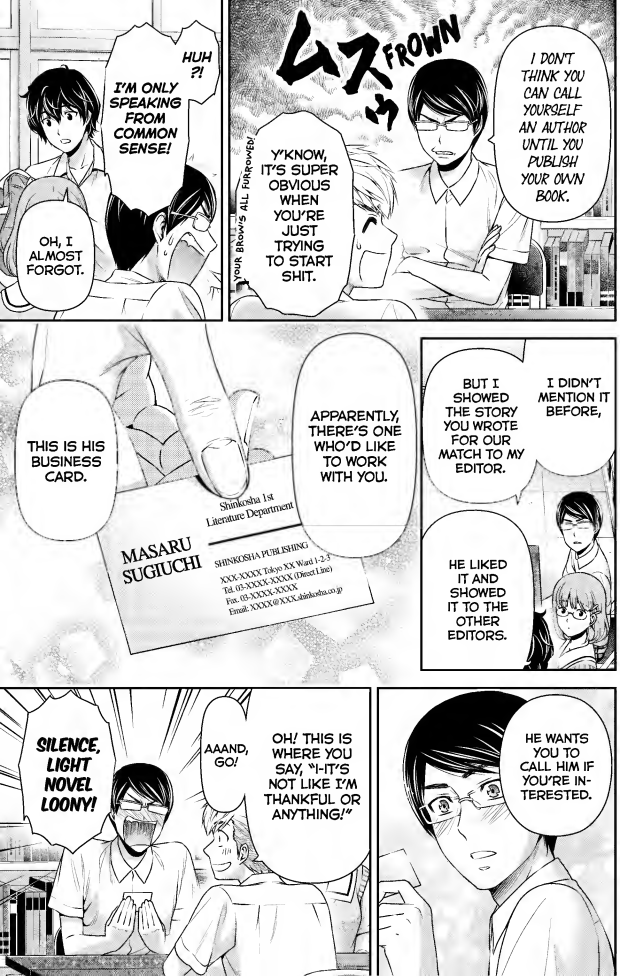

キーン DING
コーン DONG
カーン DANG
TACHIBANA-SENSEI.
HAVE YOU DONE ANY SIGHTSEEING SINCE YOU MOVED HERE?
NO, NOT REALLY.
IT'S HARD TO GET AROUND WITHOUT A CAR, AFTER ALL.
WHY DON'T WE ALL GO FOR A DRIVE ONCE SUMMER BREAK STARTS?
I'LL SHOW YOU AROUND!
YOU JUST WANT TO GO DRINKING, DON'T YOU, INAGAKI-SENSEI?
BUSTED!

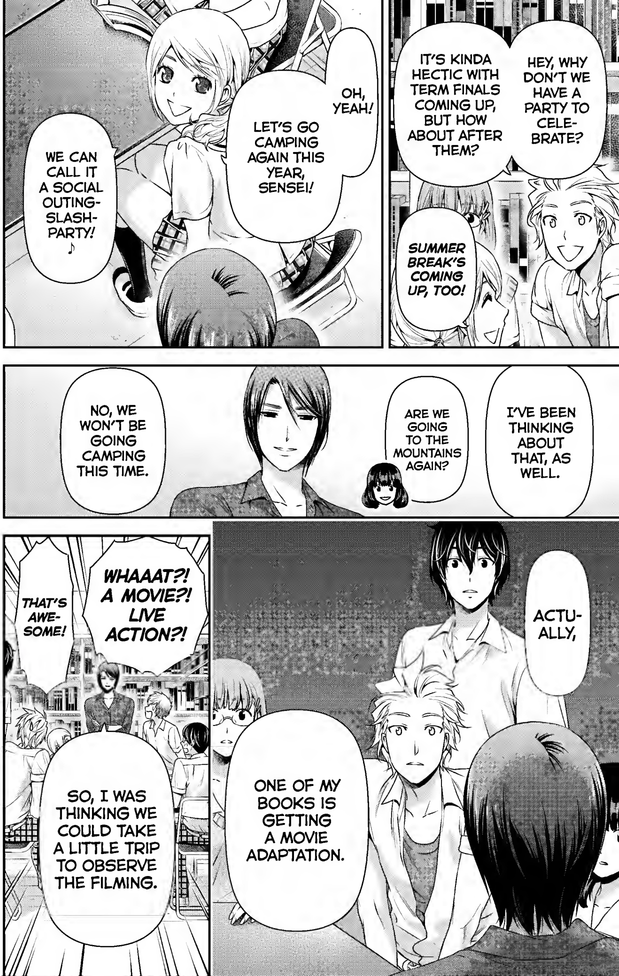
CHAPTER 93: DESTINY'S PRACTICAL JOKE

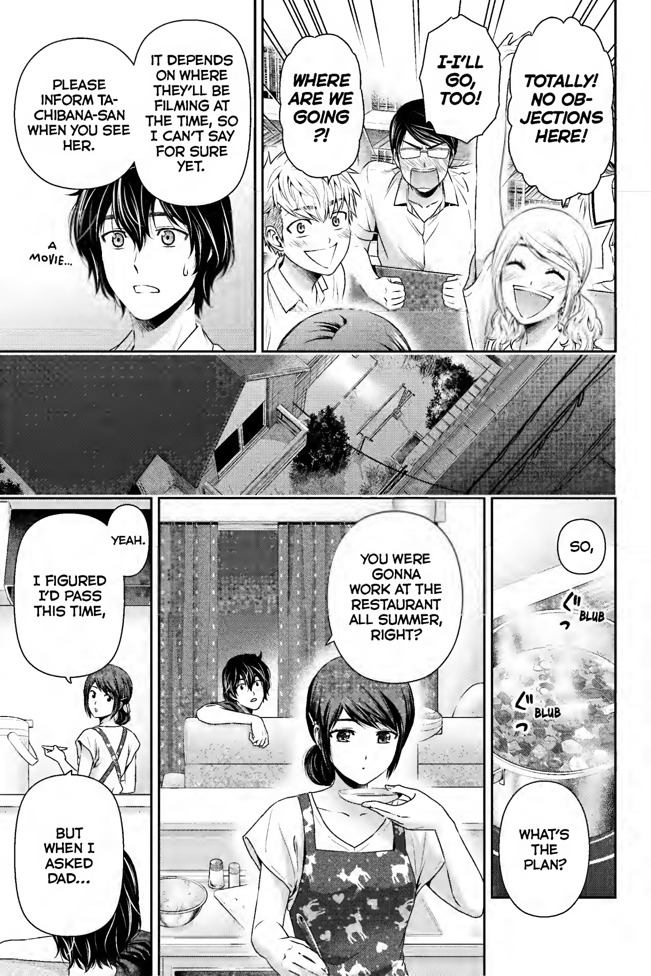


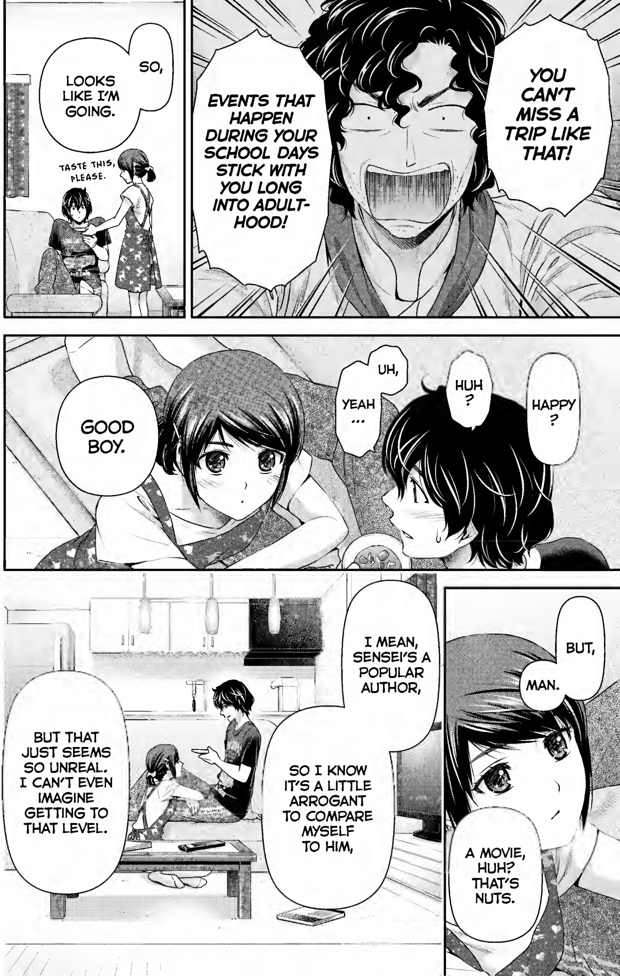

Bungei
総力特集 日本の未来を占
大型企画 ラジオの歴史
I-I-IT..
IT'S REALLY IN THERE.
BECAUSE I PUT IT THERE.
M-MY ... ONE-SHOT IS...
I TOLD YOU TO FIX IT SO I COULD PUBLISH IT.
Bungeikato
SURE,
BUT NOW THAT I SEE IT ON PAPER...
...I'M KINDA GETTING SHIVERS.
HA, HA. THAT'S HOW IT IS FOR EVERYONE AT FIRST.
TAKE THAT FEELING TO HEART AND KEEP WORKING HARD.

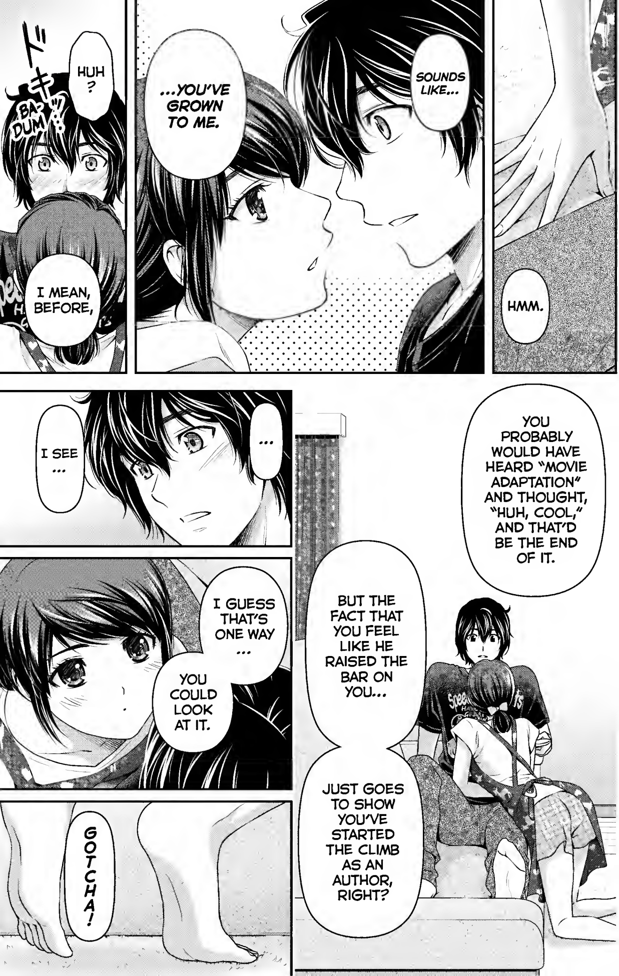

IF YOUR GOAL IS TO MAKE A LIVING OFF OF WRITING,
THEN YOU'D BETTER KEEP IT UP AND AIM TO BECOME A BETTER WRITER THAN KIRIYA-KUN.
RIGHT! I'LL DO MY BEST!
geikato
日本の未来を占う
ラジオの歴史
WOW!
IS THIS YOUR DEBUT AS A WRITER?
I GUESS YOU COULD SAY THAT.
MY AWARD PIECE WAS PRINTED EARLIER, BUT THIS IS MY FIRST TIME AS A LEGIT AUTHOR.
LOOKS LIKE WE'LL HAVE TO CALL YOU FUJII-*SENSEI* FROM NOW ON*!*
SENSEI? PLEASE...
WELL, THERE ARE TONS OF NOVICE WRITERS WHO HAVE ONE-SHOTS PUBLISHED.

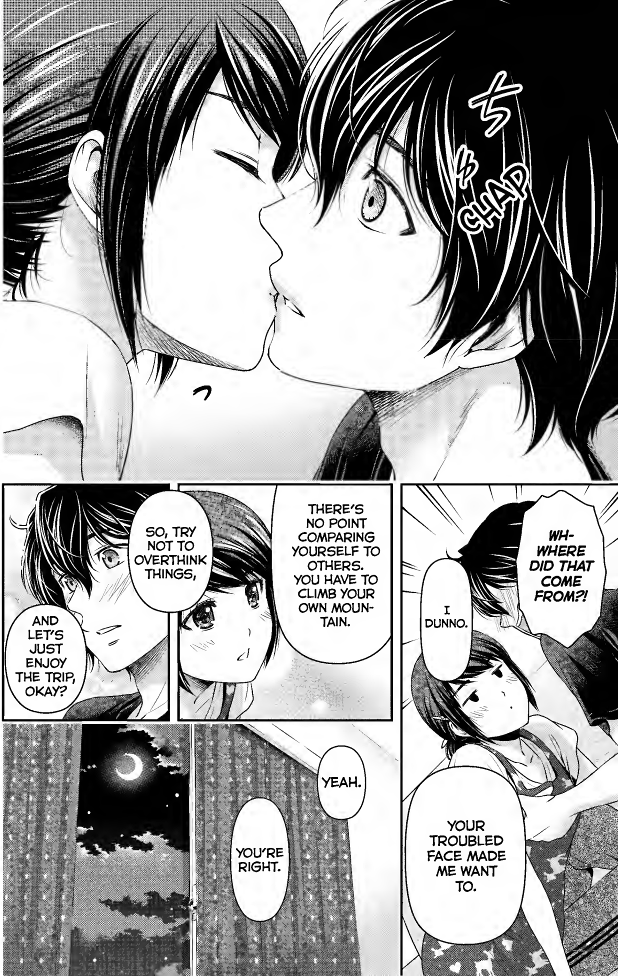

ムスッ FROWN
I DON'T THINK YOU CAN CALL YOURSELF AN AUTHOR UNTIL YOU PUBLISH YOUR OWN BOOK.
Y'KNOW, IT'S SUPER OBVIOUS WHEN YOU'RE JUST TRYING TO START SHIT.
YOUR BROW'S ALL FURROWED!
HUH ?!
I'M ONLY SPEAKING FROM COMMON SENSE!
OH, I ALMOST FORGOT.
I DIDN'T MENTION IT BEFORE,
BUT I SHOWED THE STORY YOU WROTE FOR OUR MATCH TO MY EDITOR.
HE LIKED IT AND SHOWED IT TO THE OTHER EDITORS.
APPARENTLY, THERE'S ONE WHO'D LIKE TO WORK WITH YOU.
THIS IS HIS BUSINESS CARD.
Shinkosha 1st Literature Department
MASARU SUGIUCHI
SHINKOSHA PUBLISHING
XXX-XXXX Tokyo XX Ward 1-2-3
Tel. 03-XXXX-XXXX (Direct Line)
Fax. 03-XXXX-XXXX
Email: XXXX@XXX.shinkosha.co.jp
HE WANTS YOU TO CALL HIM IF YOU'RE INTERESTED.
OH! THIS IS WHERE YOU SAY, "I-IT'S NOT LIKE I'M THANKFUL OR ANYTHING!"
AAAND, GO!
SILENCE, LIGHT NOVEL LOONY!

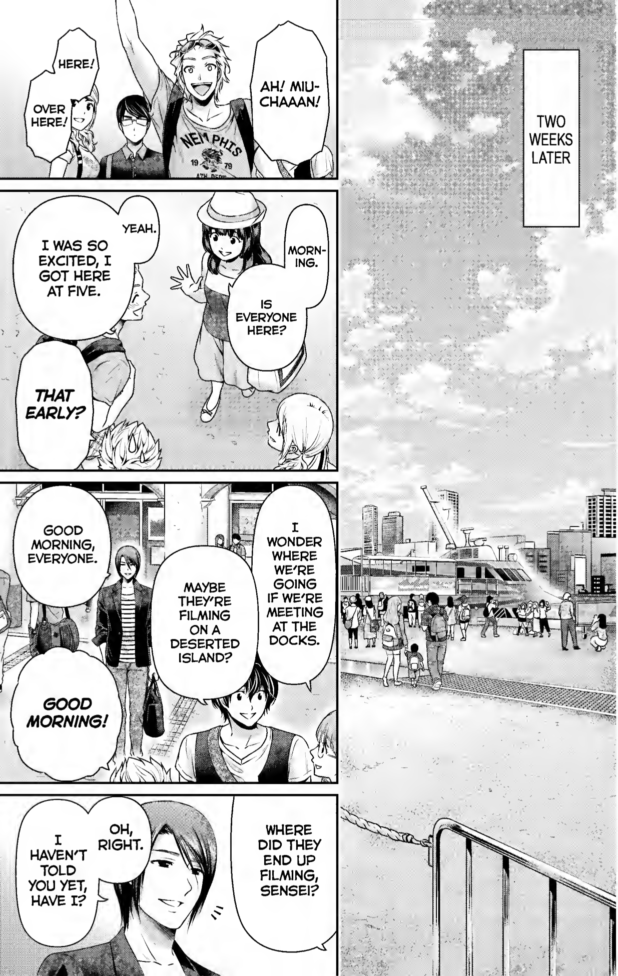

HEY, WHY DON'T WE HAVE A PARTY TO CELEBRATE?
IT'S KINDA HECTIC WITH TERM FINALS COMING UP, BUT HOW ABOUT AFTER THEM?
SUMMER BREAK'S COMING UP, TOO!
OH, YEAH!
LET'S GO CAMPING AGAIN THIS YEAR, SENSEI!
WE CAN CALL IT A SOCIAL OUTING-SLASH-PARTY! ♪
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THAT, AS WELL.
ARE WE GOING TO THE MOUNTAINS AGAIN?
NO, WE WON'T BE GOING CAMPING THIS TIME.
ACTUALLY,
ONE OF MY BOOKS IS GETTING A MOVIE ADAPTATION.
WHAAAT?! A MOVIE?! LIVE ACTION?!
THAT'S AWESOME!
SO, I WAS THINKING WE COULD TAKE A LITTLE TRIP TO OBSERVE THE FILMING.

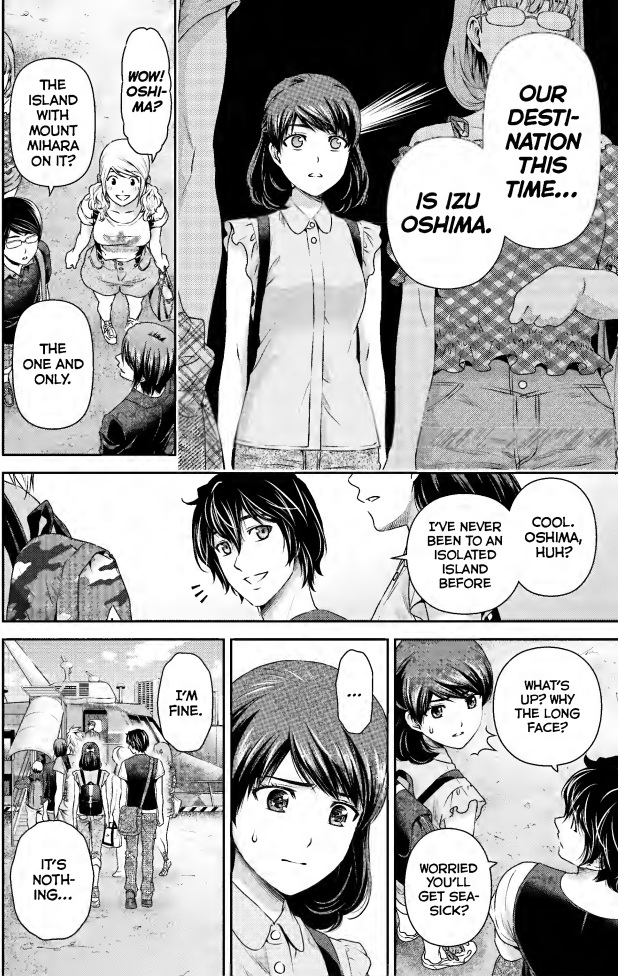

TOTALLY! NO OBJECTIONS HERE!
I-I'LL GO, TOO!
WHERE ARE WE GOING?!
IT DEPENDS ON WHERE THEY'LL BE FILMING AT THE TIME, SO I CAN'T SAY FOR SURE YET.
PLEASE INFORM TACHIBANA-SAN WHEN YOU SEE HER.
A MOVIE...
SO,
ぐつ BLUB
ぐつ BLUB
WHAT'S THE PLAN?
YOU WERE GONNA WORK AT THE RESTAURANT ALL SUMMER, RIGHT?
YEAH.
I FIGURED I'D PASS THIS TIME,
BUT WHEN I ASKED DAD...

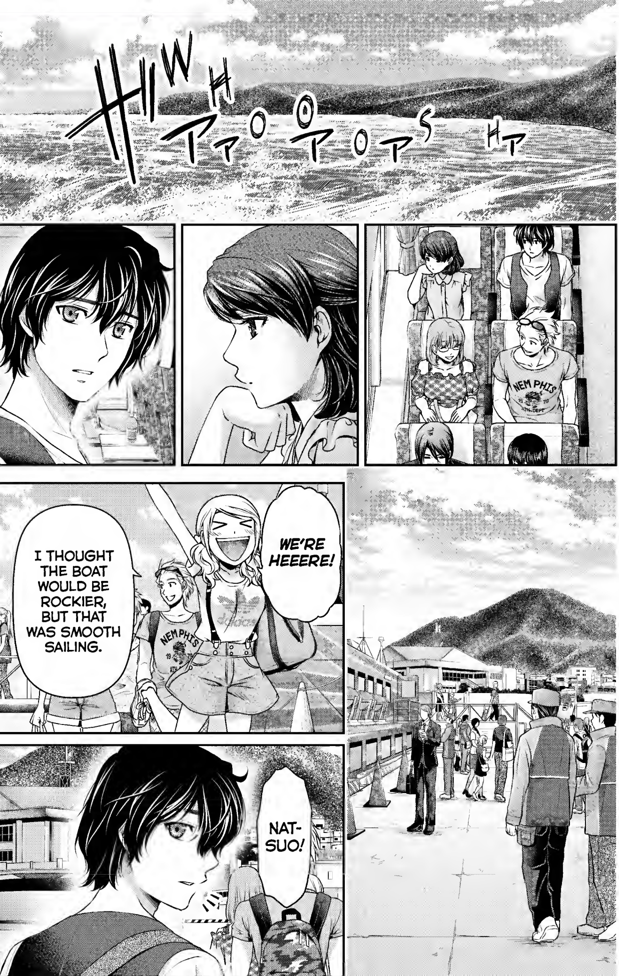

YOU CAN'T MISS A TRIP LIKE THAT!
EVENTS THAT HAPPEN DURING YOUR SCHOOL DAYS STICK WITH YOU LONG INTO ADULTHOOD!
SO, LOOKS LIKE I'M GOING.
TASTE THIS, PLEASE.
HAPPY?
HUH?
UH, YEAH...
GOOD BOY.
BUT, MAN.
A MOVIE, HUH? THAT'S NUTS.
I MEAN, SENSEI'S A POPULAR AUTHOR,
SO I KNOW IT'S A LITTLE ARROGANT TO COMPARE MYSELF TO HIM,
BUT THAT JUST SEEMS SO UNREAL. I CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE GETTING TO THAT LEVEL.

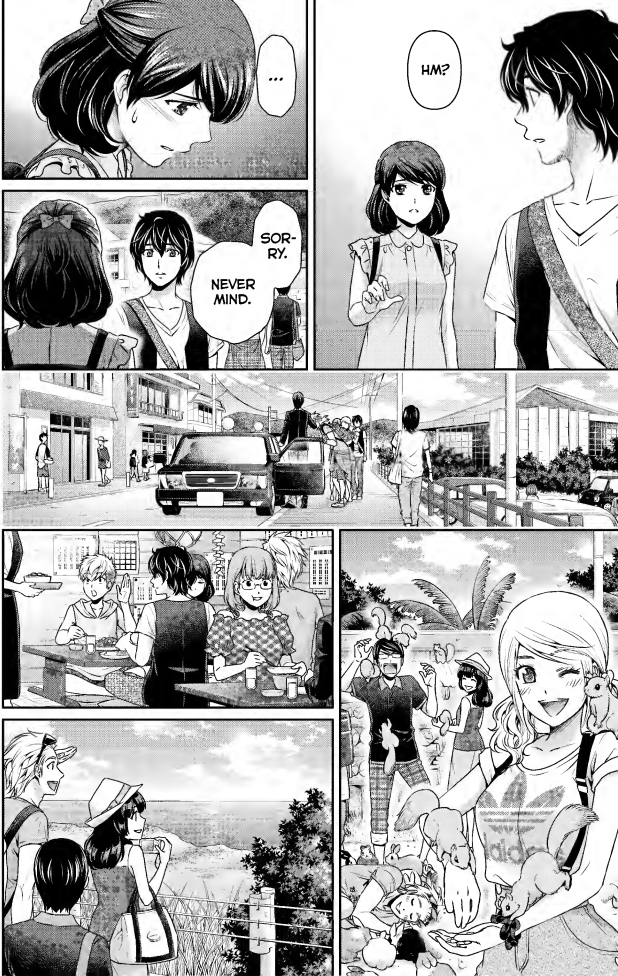

HMM.
SOUNDS LIKE...
...YOU'VE GROWN TO ME.
HUH?
ドキッ
BA-DUM
I MEAN, BEFORE,
YOU PROBABLY WOULD HAVE HEARD "MOVIE ADAPTATION" AND THOUGHT, "HUH, COOL," AND THAT'D BE THE END OF IT.
BUT THE FACT THAT YOU FEEL LIKE HE RAISED THE BAR ON YOU...
JUST GOES TO SHOW YOU'VE STARTED THE CLIMB AS AN AUTHOR, RIGHT?
...
I SEE...
I GUESS THAT'S ONE WAY...
YOU COULD LOOK AT IT.
GOTCHA!

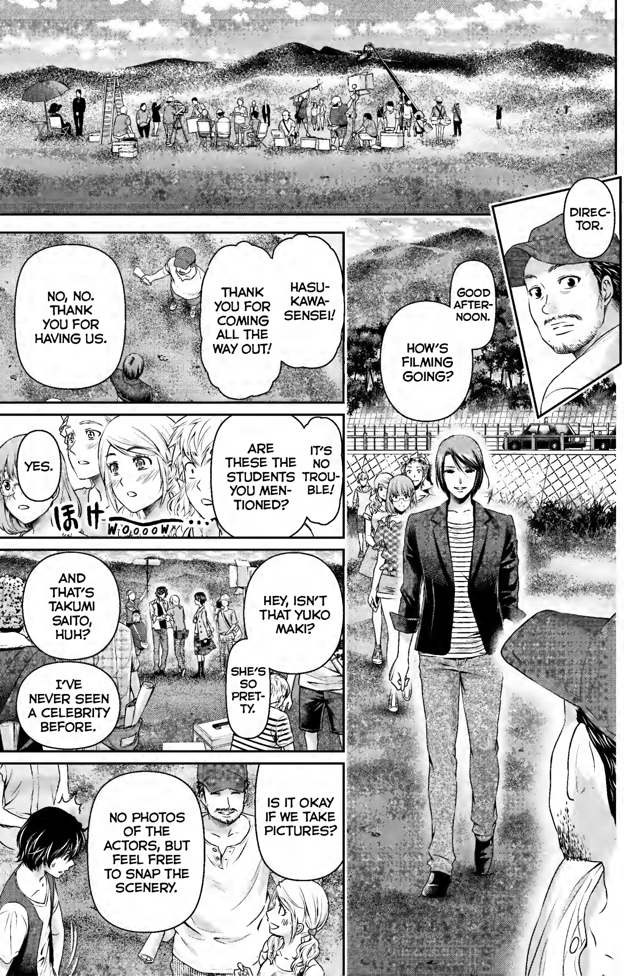

ちゅ
CHAP
WH- WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?!
I DUNNO.
YOUR TROUBLED FACE MADE ME WANT TO.
THERE'S NO POINT COMPARING YOURSELF TO OTHERS. YOU HAVE TO CLIMB YOUR OWN MOUNTAIN.
SO, TRY NOT TO OVERTHINK THINGS,
AND LET'S JUST ENJOY THE TRIP, OKAY?
YEAH.
YOU'RE RIGHT.

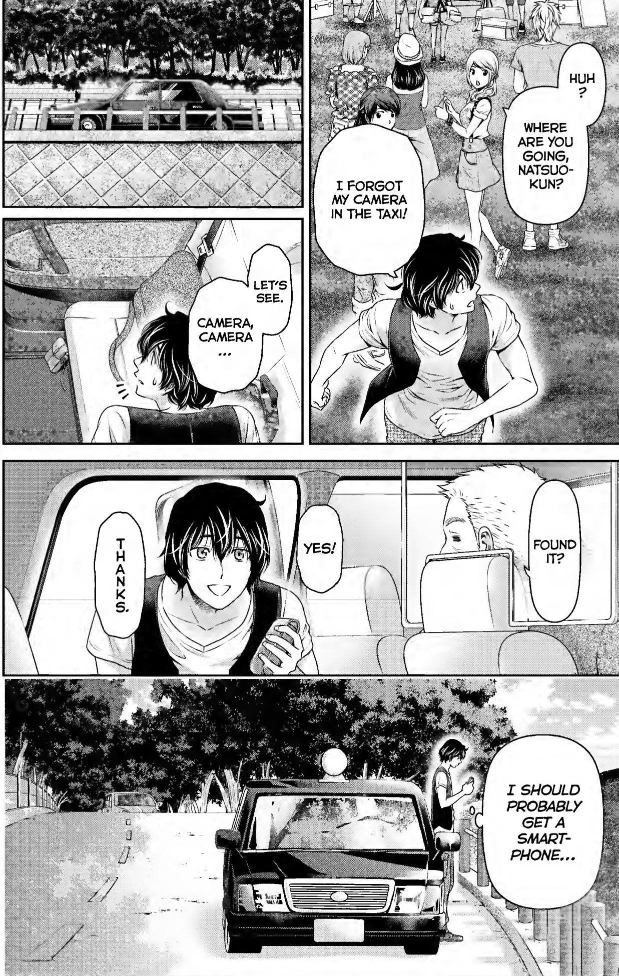

TWO WEEKS LATER
AH! MIU-CHAAAN!
HERE!
OVER HERE!
MEMPHIS 1979
MORNING.
IS EVERYONE HERE?
YEAH.
I WAS SO EXCITED, I GOT HERE AT FIVE.
THAT EARLY?
I WONDER WHERE WE'RE GOING IF WE'RE MEETING AT THE DOCKS.
MAYBE THEY'RE FILMING ON A DESERTED ISLAND?
GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE.
GOOD MORNING!
WHERE DID THEY END UP FILMING, SENSEI?
OH, RIGHT.
I HAVEN'T TOLD YOU YET, HAVE I?

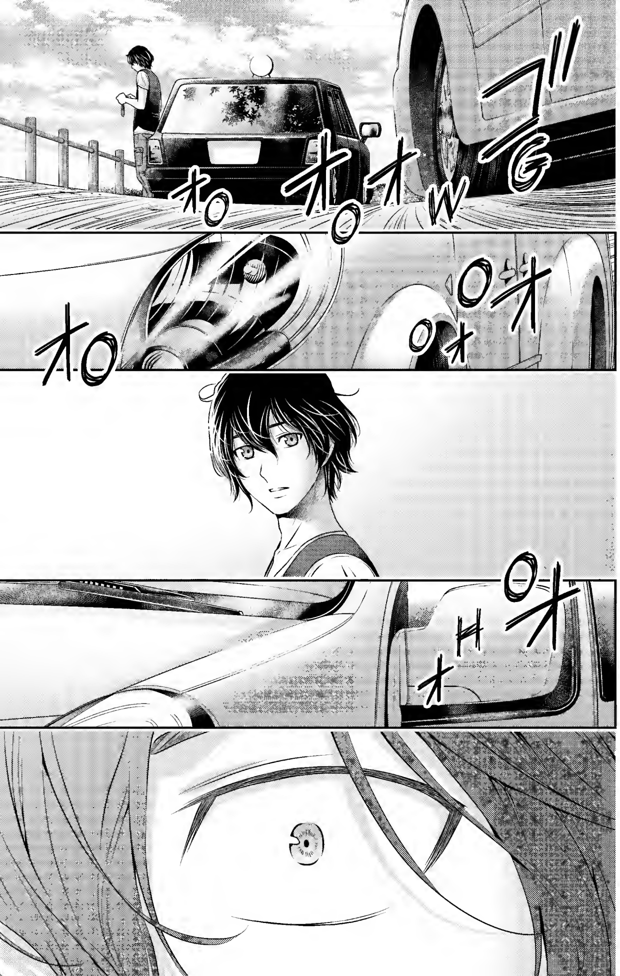

OUR DESTINATION THIS TIME...
IS IZU OSHIMA.
WOW! OSHIMA?
THE ISLAND WITH MOUNT MIHARA ON IT?
THE ONE AND ONLY.
COOL. OSHIMA, HUH?
I'VE NEVER BEEN TO AN ISOLATED ISLAND BEFORE
WHAT'S UP? WHY THE LONG FACE?
WORRIED YOU'LL GET SEASICK?
...
I'M FINE.
IT'S NOTHING...


WE'RE HEEERE!
I THOUGHT THE BOAT WOULD BE ROCKIER, BUT THAT WAS SMOOTH SAILING.
NAT-SUO!


HM?
...
SORRY.
NEVER MIND.


DIRECTOR.
GOOD AFTERNOON.
HOW'S FILMING GOING?
HASUKAWA-SENSEI!
THANK YOU FOR COMING ALL THE WAY OUT!
NO, NO. THANK YOU FOR HAVING US.
IT'S NO TROUBLE!
ARE THESE THE STUDENTS YOU MENTIONED?
YES.
ほけ WOOOOW...
HEY, ISN'T THAT YUKO MAKI?
SHE'S SO PRETTY.
AND THAT'S TAKUMI SAITO, HUH?
I'VE NEVER SEEN A CELEBRITY BEFORE.
IS IT OKAY IF WE TAKE PICTURES?
NO PHOTOS OF THE ACTORS, BUT FEEL FREE TO SNAP THE SCENERY.


HUH?
WHERE ARE YOU GOING, NATSUO-KUN?
I FORGOT MY CAMERA IN THE TAXI!
LET'S SEE.
CAMERA, CAMERA...
FOUND IT?
YES!
THANKS.
I SHOULD PROBABLY GET A SMARTPHONE...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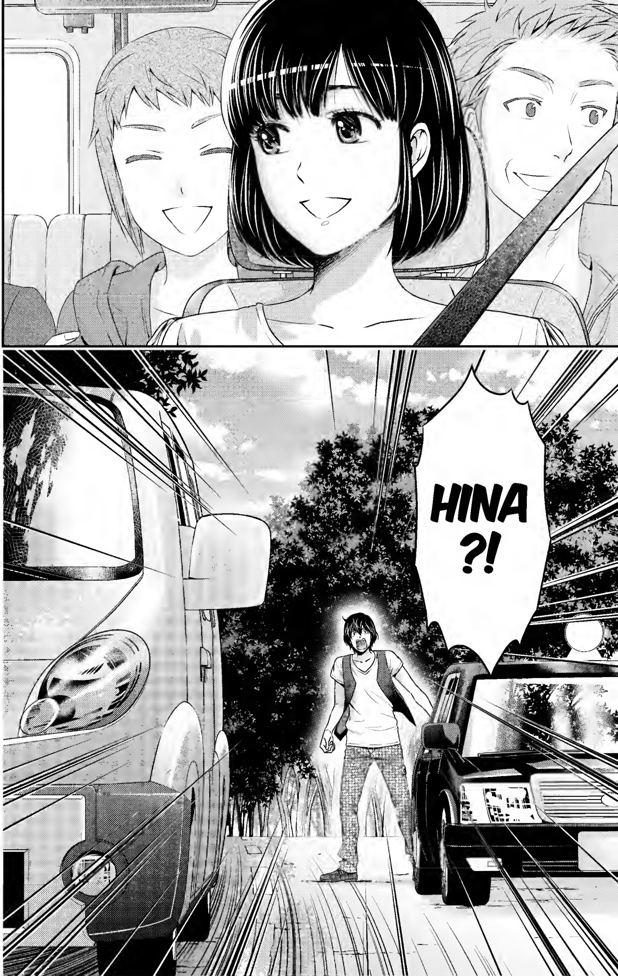
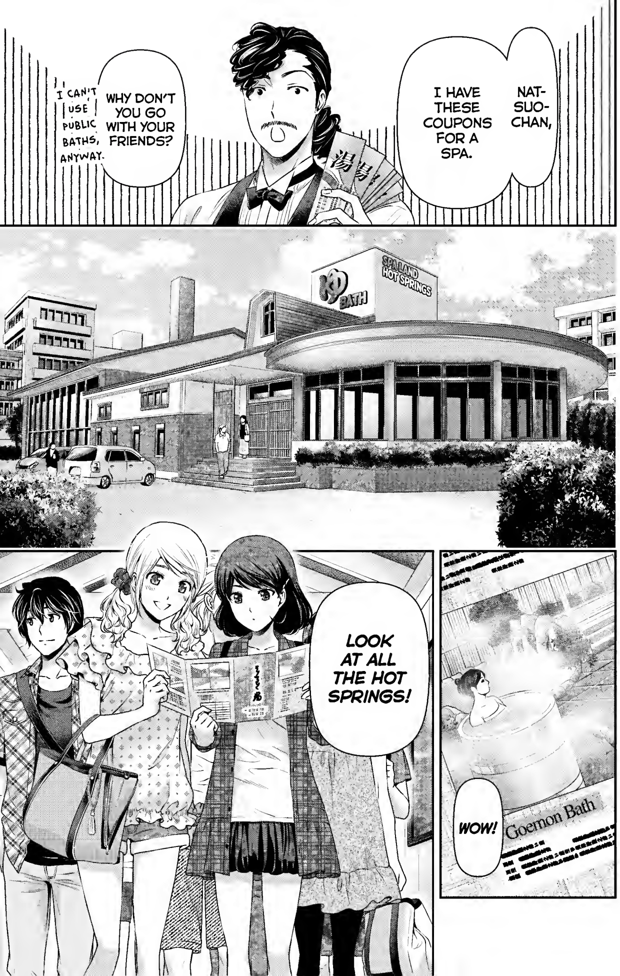
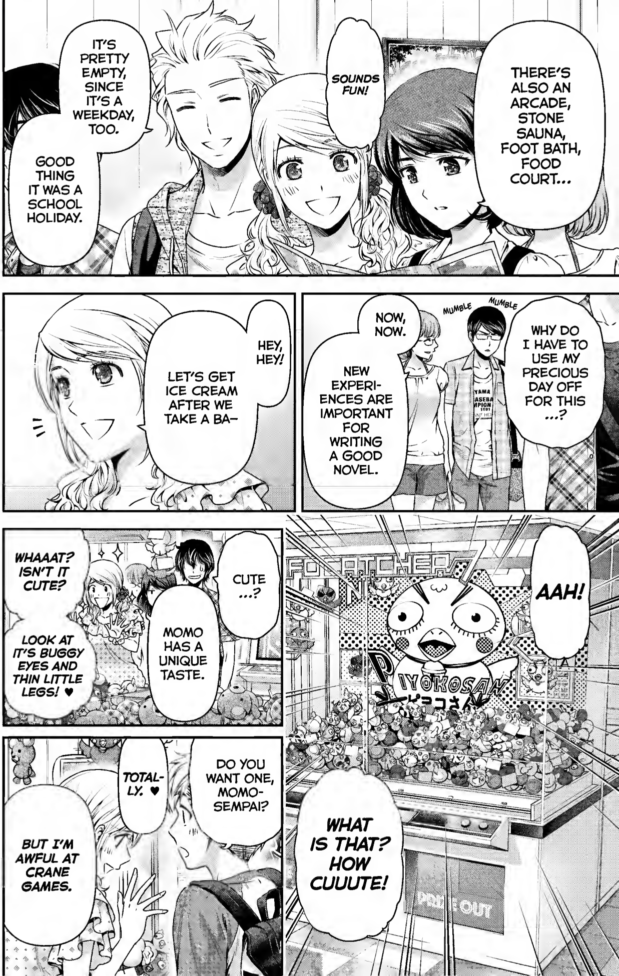
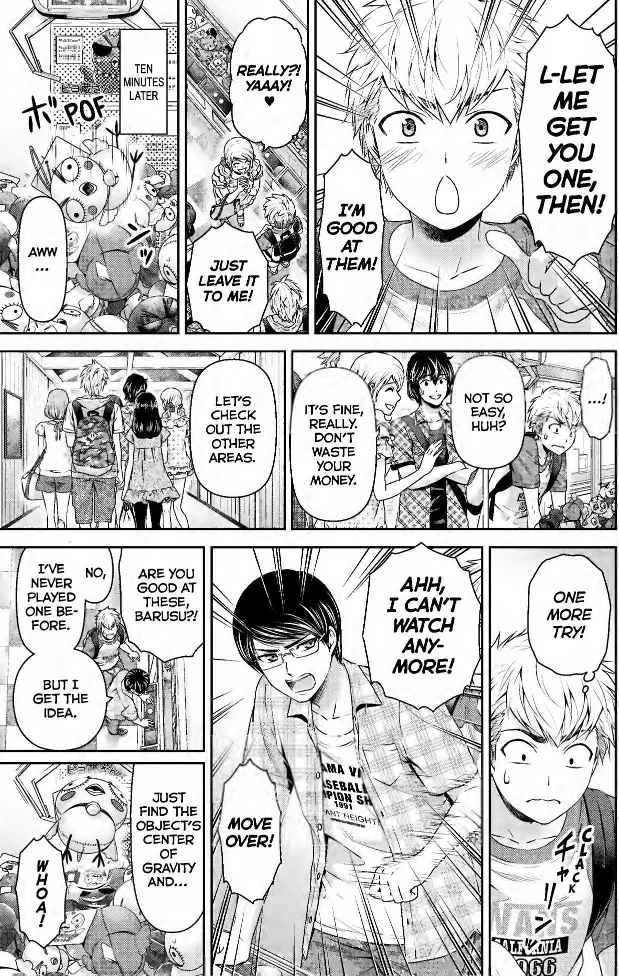
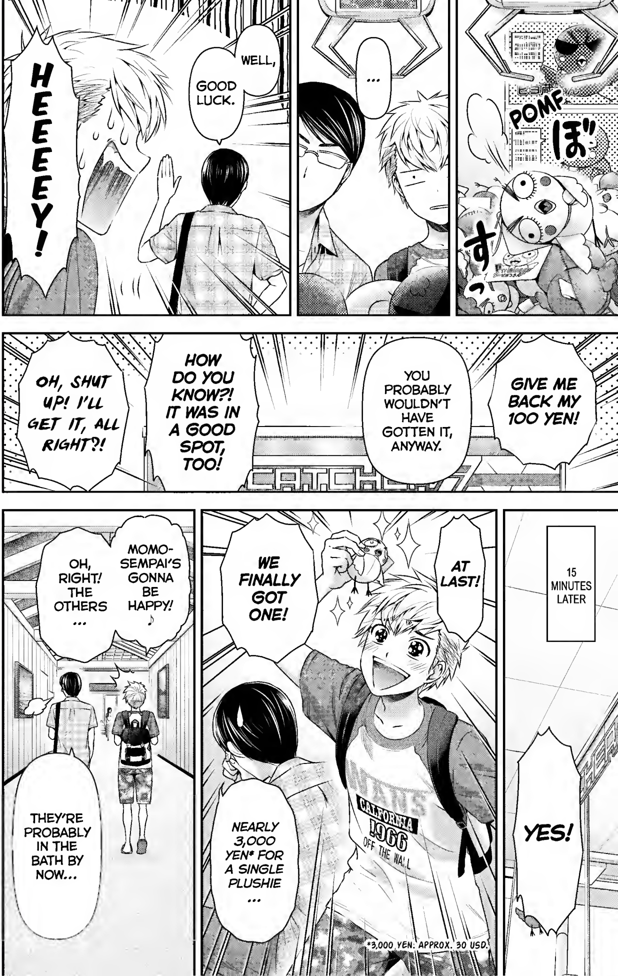

HINA ?!

SIDE STORY: GO, GO, SPA LAND!

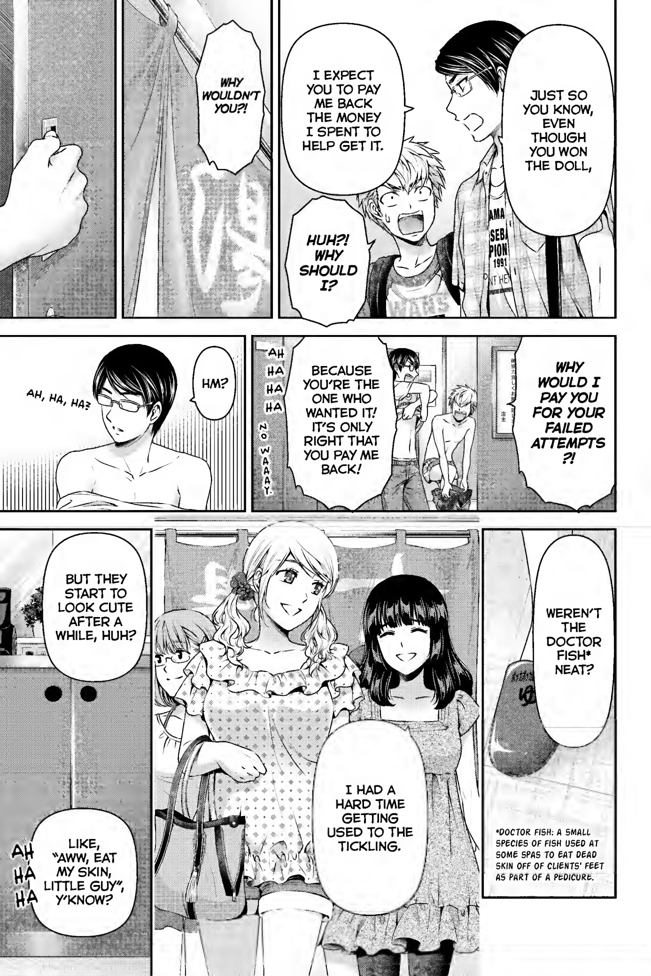

NATSUO-CHAN,
I HAVE THESE COUPONS FOR A SPA.
湯湯!
WHY DON'T YOU GO WITH YOUR FRIENDS?
I CAN'T USE PUBLIC BATHS, ANYWAY.
SPA LAND HOT SPRINGS
BATH
Goemon Bath
WOW!
LOOK AT ALL THE HOT SPRINGS!


THERE'S ALSO AN ARCADE, STONE SAUNA, FOOT BATH, FOOD COURT...
SOUNDS FUN!
IT'S PRETTY EMPTY, SINCE IT'S A WEEKDAY, TOO.
GOOD THING IT WAS A SCHOOL HOLIDAY.
WHY DO I HAVE TO USE MY PRECIOUS DAY OFF FOR THIS ...?
MUMBLE MUMBLE
NOW, NOW.
NEW EXPERIENCES ARE IMPORTANT FOR WRITING A GOOD NOVEL.
HEY, HEY!
LET'S GET ICE CREAM AFTER WE TAKE A BA–
AAH!
PIYOKOSAN
ピヨコさん
PRIZE OUT
WHAT IS THAT? HOW CUUUTE!
CUTE ...?
MOMO HAS A UNIQUE TASTE.
WHAAAT? ISN'T IT CUTE?
LOOK AT IT'S BUGGY EYES AND THIN LITTLE LEGS! ♥
DO YOU WANT ONE, MOMO-SEMPAI?
TOTALLY. ♥
BUT I'M AWFUL AT CRANE GAMES.

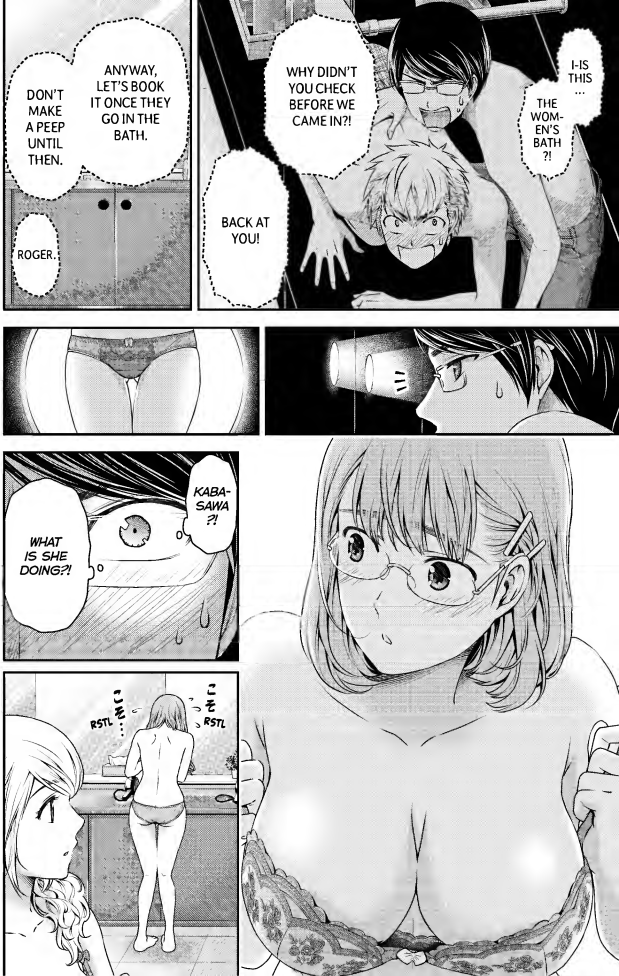

L-LET ME GET YOU ONE, THEN!
I'M GOOD AT THEM!
REALLY?! YAAAY! ♥
JUST LEAVE IT TO ME!
TEN MINUTES LATER
ピヨ成さん
ボ POF
AWW...
ズッ
...!
NOT SO EASY, HUH?
IT'S FINE, REALLY. DON'T WASTE YOUR MONEY.
LET'S CHECK OUT THE OTHER AREAS.
ONE MORE TRY!
チャリーン CLACK
AHH, I CAN'T WATCH ANYMORE!
MOVE OVER!
ARE YOU GOOD AT THESE, BARUSU?!
NO,
I'VE NEVER PLAYED ONE BEFORE.
BUT I GET THE IDEA.
ピヨ成さん
JUST FIND THE OBJECT'S CENTER OF GRAVITY AND...
WHOA!

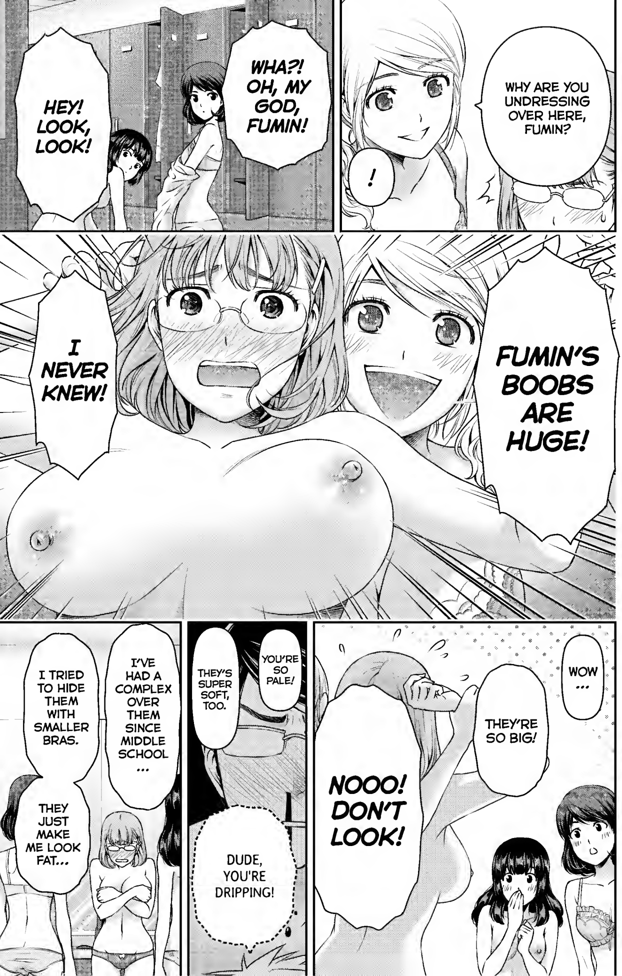

POMF
ぼ
すっ
...
WELL,
GOOD LUCK.
HEEEEEEY!
GIVE ME BACK MY 100 YEN!
YOU PROBABLY WOULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN IT, ANYWAY.
HOW DO YOU KNOW?! IT WAS IN A GOOD SPOT, TOO!
OH, SHUT UP! I'LL GET IT, ALL RIGHT?!
CATCHER
15 MINUTES LATER
YES!
AT LAST!
WE FINALLY GOT ONE!
NEARLY 3,000 YEN* FOR A SINGLE PLUSHIE ...
MOMO-SEMPAI'S GONNA BE HAPPY! ♪
OH, RIGHT! THE OTHERS ...
THEY'RE PROBABLY IN THE BATH BY NOW...

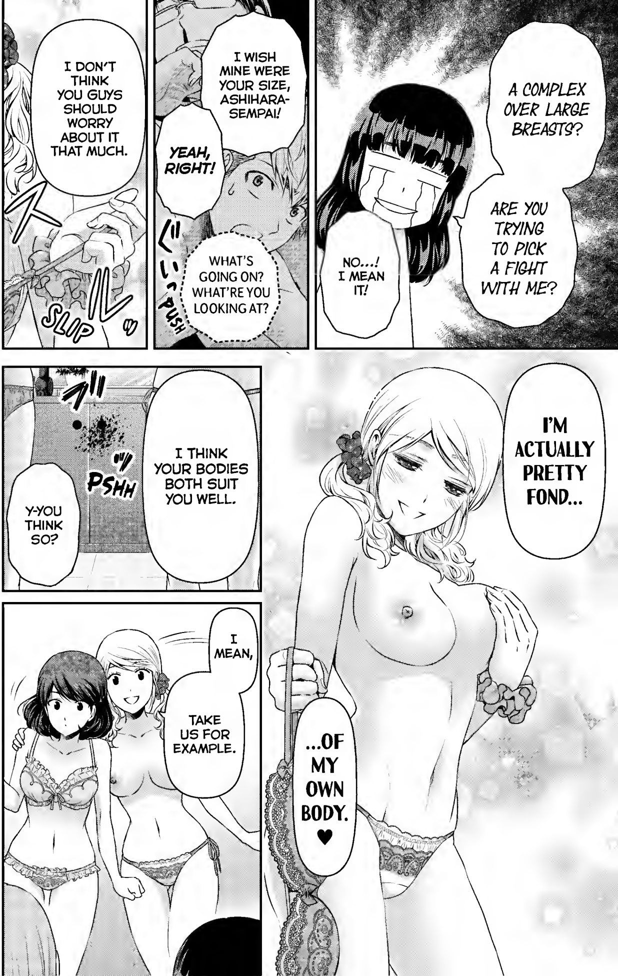
*3,000 YEN: APPROX. 30 USD.

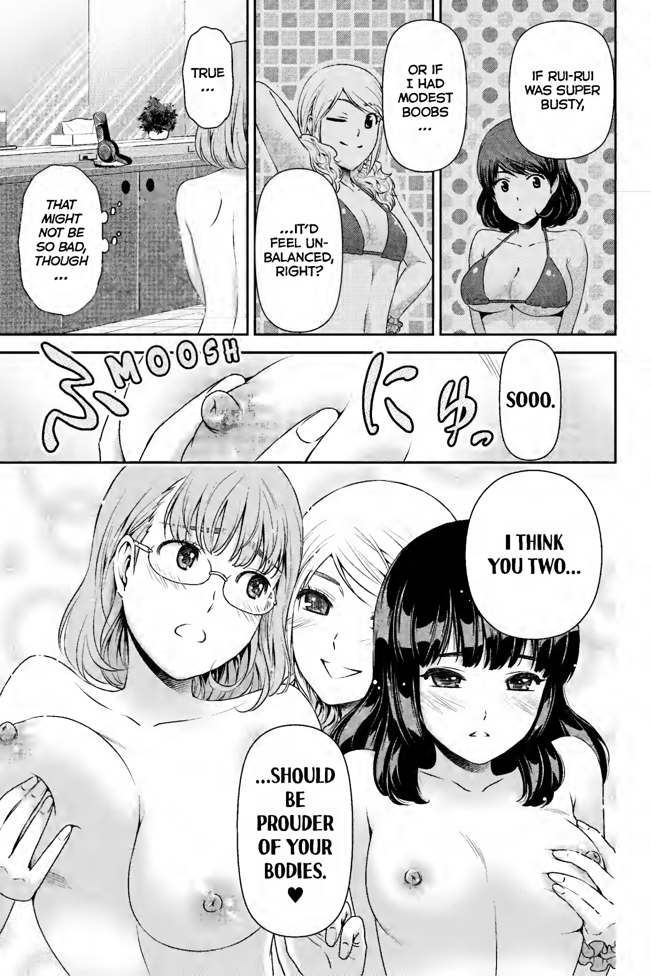

JUST SO YOU KNOW, EVEN THOUGH YOU WON THE DOLL,
I EXPECT YOU TO PAY ME BACK THE MONEY I SPENT TO HELP GET IT.
HUH?! WHY SHOULD I?
WHY WOULDN'T YOU?!
WHY WOULD I PAY YOU FOR YOUR FAILED ATTEMPTS?!
BECAUSE YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WANTED IT! IT'S ONLY RIGHT THAT YOU PAY ME BACK!
AH HA HA HA
NO WAAAY.
HM?
AH, HA, HA?
WEREN'T THE DOCTOR FISH* NEAT?
I HAD A HARD TIME GETTING USED TO THE TICKLING.
BUT THEY START TO LOOK CUTE AFTER A WHILE, HUH?
LIKE, "AWW, EAT MY SKIN, LITTLE GUY", Y'KNOW?
AH HA HA HA

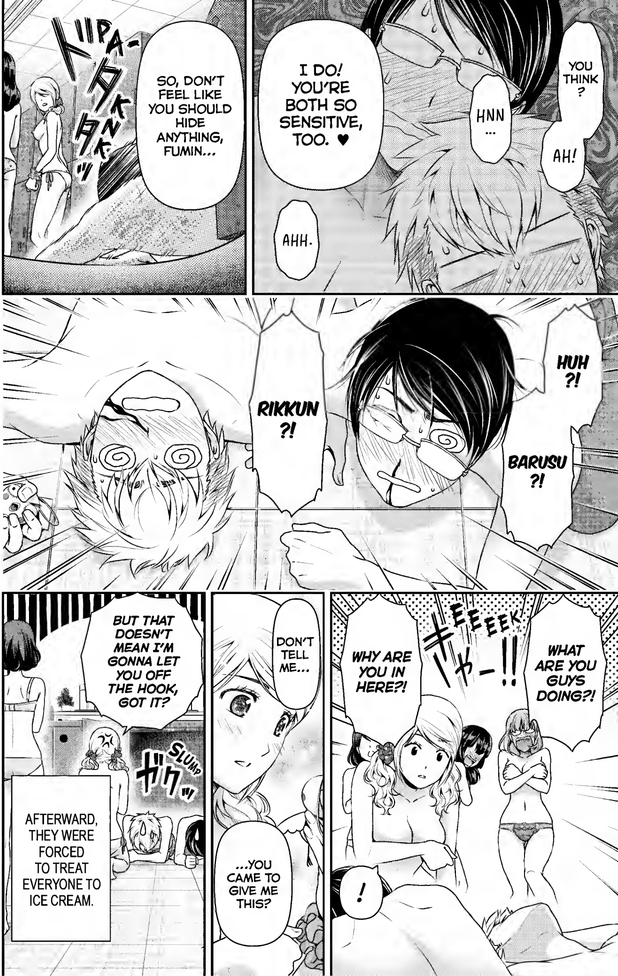
*DOCTOR FISH: A SMALL SPECIES OF FISH USED AT SOME SPAS TO EAT DEAD SKIN OFF OF CLIENTS' FEET AS PART OF A PEDICURE.


I-IS THIS ...
THE WOMEN'S BATH ?!
WHY DIDN'T YOU CHECK BEFORE WE CAME IN?!
BACK AT YOU!
ANYWAY, LET'S BOOK IT ONCE THEY GO IN THE BATH.
DON'T MAKE A PEEP UNTIL THEN.
ROGER.
KABASAWA ?!
WHAT IS SHE DOING?!
こそ RSTL
こそ… RSTL


WHY ARE YOU UNDRESSING OVER HERE, FUMIN?
!
WHA?! OH, MY GOD, FUMIN!
HEY! LOOK, LOOK!
FUMIN'S BOOBS ARE HUGE!
I NEVER KNEW!
WOW ...
THEY'RE SO BIG!
NOOO! DON'T LOOK!
YOU'RE SO PALE!
THEY'S SUPER SOFT, TOO.
DUDE, YOU'RE DRIPPING!
I'VE HAD A COMPLEX OVER THEM SINCE MIDDLE SCHOOL ...
I TRIED TO HIDE THEM WITH SMALLER BRAS.
THEY JUST MAKE ME LOOK FAT...


A COMPLEX OVER LARGE BREASTS?
ARE YOU TRYING TO PICK A FIGHT WITH ME?
NO...! I MEAN IT!
I WISH MINE WERE YOUR SIZE, ASHIHARA-SEMPAI!
YEAH, RIGHT!
ぐいっ
PUSH
WHAT'S GOING ON? WHAT'RE YOU LOOKING AT?
I DON'T THINK YOU GUYS SHOULD WORRY ABOUT IT THAT MUCH.
スル
SLIP
I'M ACTUALLY PRETTY FOND...
...OF MY OWN BODY. ♥
ブッ
PSHH
I THINK YOUR BODIES BOTH SUIT YOU WELL.
Y-YOU THINK SO?
I MEAN,
TAKE US FOR EXAMPLE.


IF RUI-RUI WAS SUPER BUSTY,
OR IF I HAD MODEST BOOBS ...
...IT'D FEEL UN-BALANCED, RIGHT?
TRUE ...
THAT MIGHT NOT BE SO BAD, THOUGH ...
SOOO.
にゅっ
ふ
MOOSH
I THINK YOU TWO...
...SHOULD BE PROUDER OF YOUR BODIES. ♥

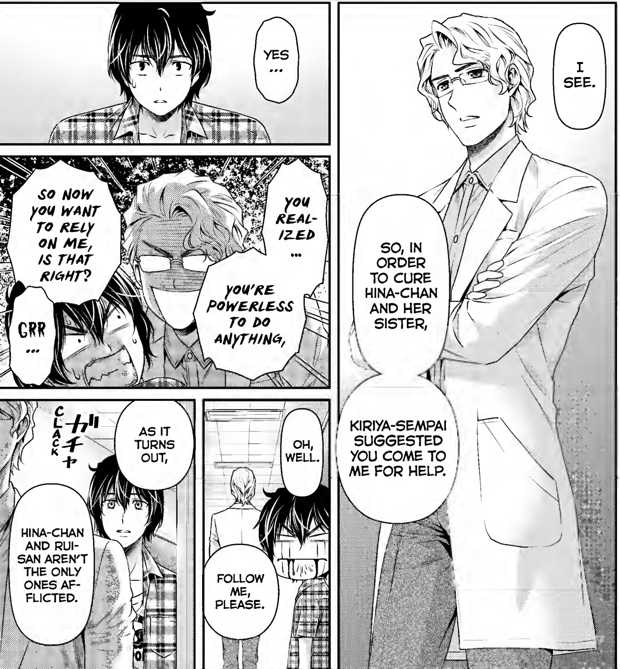

YOU THINK?
HNN...
AH!
I DO! YOU'RE BOTH SO SENSITIVE, TOO. ♥
AHH.
トーパタ PA-KNK タッ
SO, DON'T FEEL LIKE YOU SHOULD HIDE ANYTHING, FUMIN...
HUH?!
BARUSU?!
RIKKUN?!
EEEEEK キャー!!
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING?!
WHY ARE YOU IN HERE?!
!
DON'T TELL ME...
...YOU CAME TO GIVE ME THIS?
BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I'M GONNA LET YOU OFF THE HOOK, GOT IT?
SLUMP ガクッ
AFTERWARD, THEY WERE FORCED TO TREAT EVERYONE TO ICE CREAM.

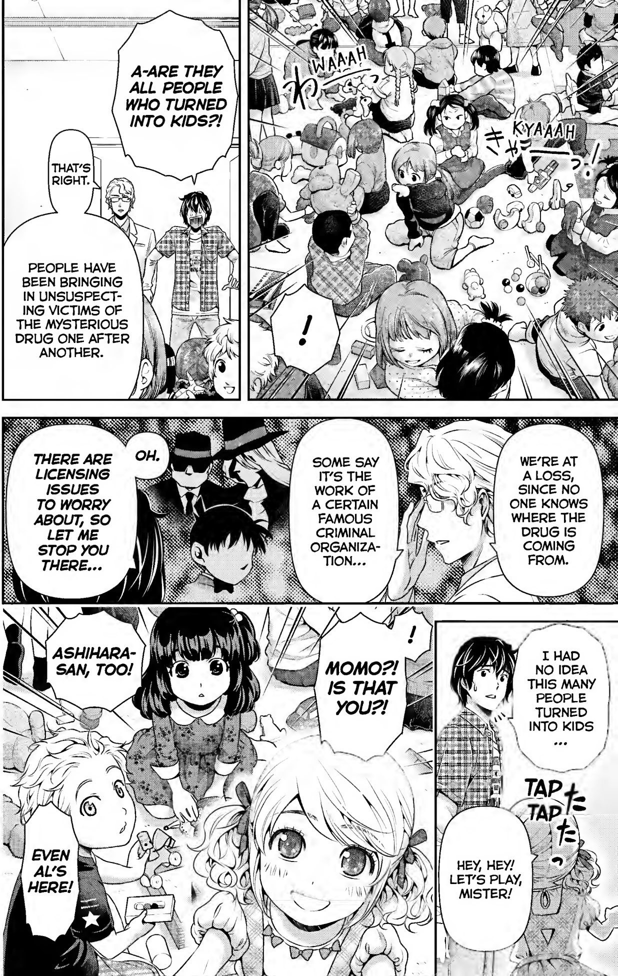
EXTRA MANGA

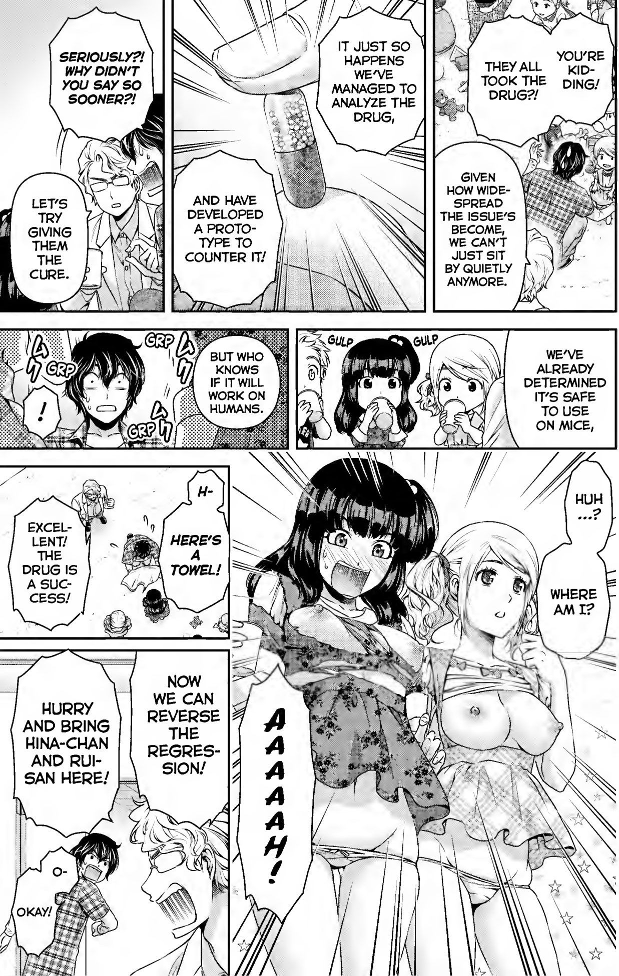
SWEET HOME MAGIC

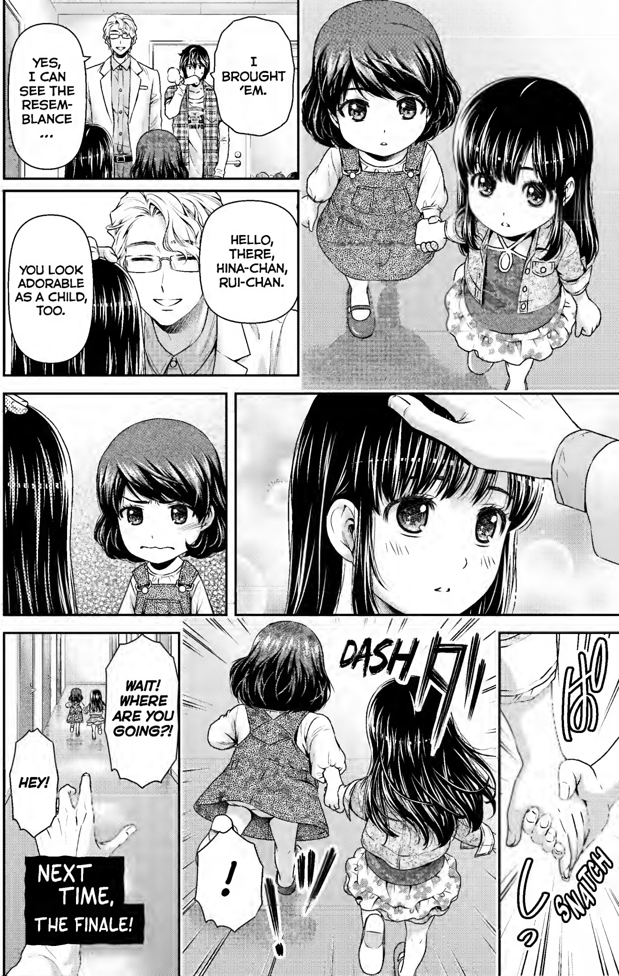
☆ THE STORY SO FAR ☆

HINA AND RUI HAVE REVERTED BACK TO CHILDREN. AFTER SEEKING HELP FROM KOBAYASHI AND KIRIYA TO NO AVAIL, NATSUO COMES CRYING TO PHARMACEUTICAL RESEARCHER, HAGIWARA...


I SEE.
SO, IN ORDER TO CURE HINA-CHAN AND HER SISTER,
KIRIYA-SEMPAI SUGGESTED YOU COME TO ME FOR HELP.
YES...
YOU REALIZED...
YOU'RE POWERLESS TO DO ANYTHING,
SO NOW YOU WANT TO RELY ON ME, IS THAT RIGHT?
GRR...
OH, WELL.
FOLLOW ME, PLEASE.
カチャ CLACK
AS IT TURNS OUT,
HINA-CHAN AND RUI-SAN AREN'T THE ONLY ONES AFFLICTED.


WAAAH
わーっ
KYAAAH
きゃーっ
!
A-ARE THEY ALL PEOPLE WHO TURNED INTO KIDS?!
THAT'S RIGHT.
PEOPLE HAVE BEEN BRINGING IN UNSUSPECTING VICTIMS OF THE MYSTERIOUS DRUG ONE AFTER ANOTHER.
WE'RE AT A LOSS, SINCE NO ONE KNOWS WHERE THE DRUG IS COMING FROM.
SOME SAY IT'S THE WORK OF A CERTAIN FAMOUS CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION...
OH.
THERE ARE LICENSING ISSUES TO WORRY ABOUT, SO LET ME STOP YOU THERE...
I HAD NO IDEA THIS MANY PEOPLE TURNED INTO KIDS...
TAP TAP
たったっ
HEY, HEY! LET'S PLAY, MISTER!
!
MOMO?! IS THAT YOU?!
ASHIHARA-SAN, TOO!
EVEN AL'S HERE!


YOU'RE KIDDING!
THEY ALL TOOK THE DRUG?!
GIVEN HOW WIDESPREAD THE ISSUE'S BECOME, WE CAN'T JUST SIT BY QUIETLY ANYMORE.
IT JUST SO HAPPENS WE'VE MANAGED TO ANALYZE THE DRUG,
AND HAVE DEVELOPED A PROTOTYPE TO COUNTER IT!
SERIOUSLY?! WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO SOONER?!
LET'S TRY GIVING THEM THE CURE.
WE'VE ALREADY DETERMINED IT'S SAFE TO USE ON MICE,
GULP
GULP
BUT WHO KNOWS IF IT WILL WORK ON HUMANS.
GRP
GRP
GRP
GRP
!
HUH ...?
WHERE AM I?
AAAAAAH!
H-
HERE'S A TOWEL!
EXCELLENT! THE DRUG IS A SUCCESS!
NOW WE CAN REVERSE THE REGRESSION!
HURRY AND BRING HINA-CHAN AND RUI-SAN HERE!
O-
OKAY!


I BROUGHT 'EM.
YES, I CAN SEE THE RESEMBLANCE ...
HELLO, THERE, HINA-CHAN, RUI-CHAN.
YOU LOOK ADORABLE AS A CHILD, TOO.
SNATCH
DASH
!
WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!
HEY!
NEXT TIME, THE FINALE!

Domestic Girlfriend 10

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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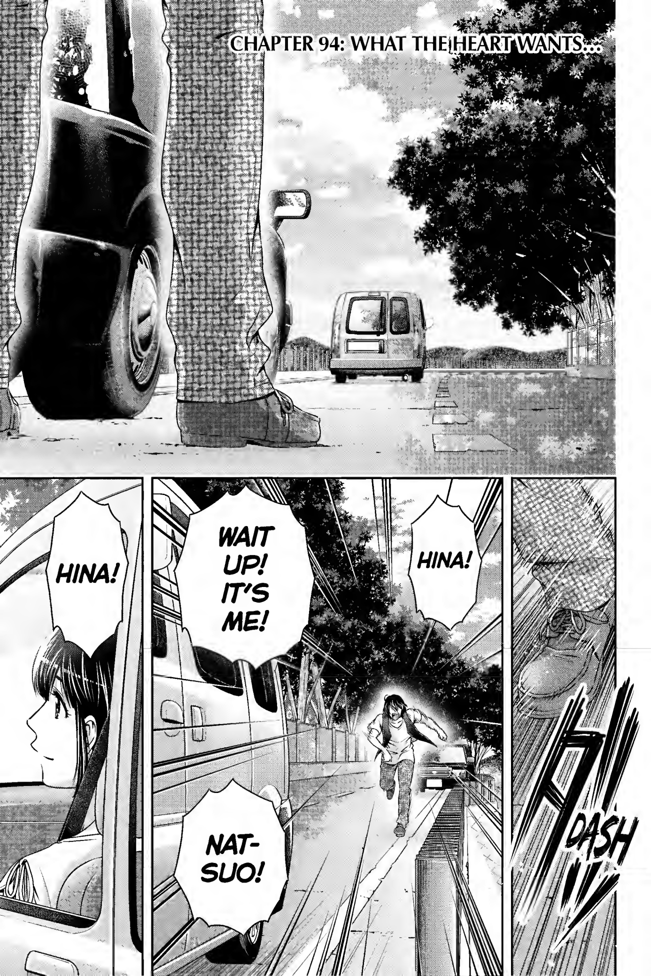
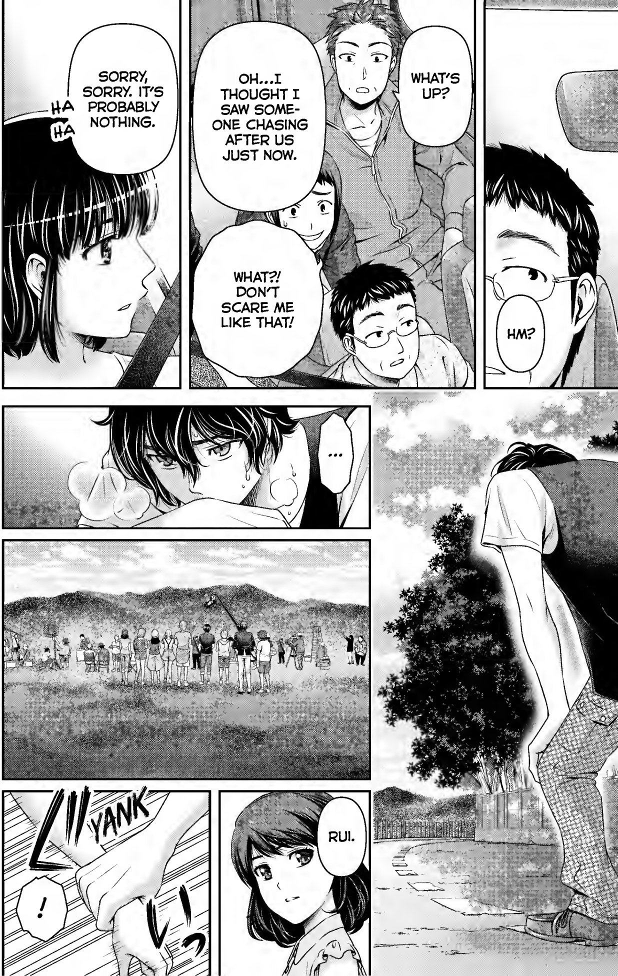
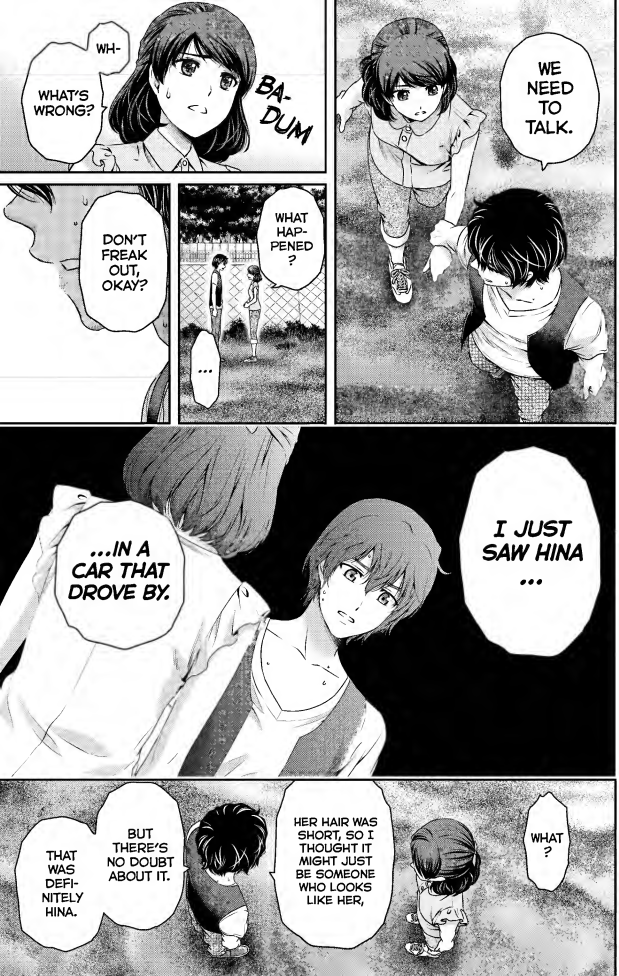
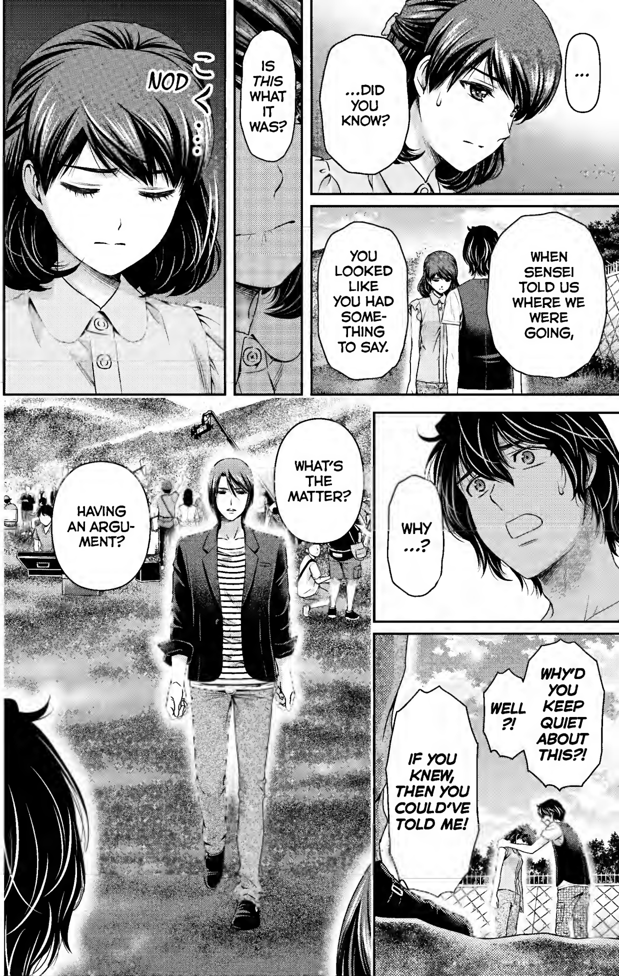
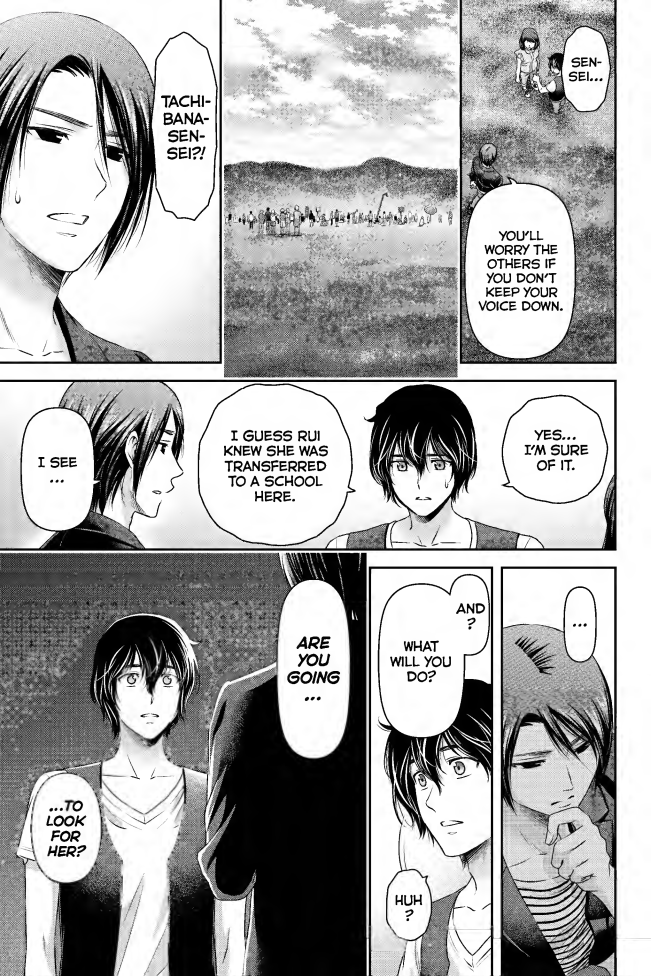
CHAPTER 94: WHAT THE HEART WANTS...

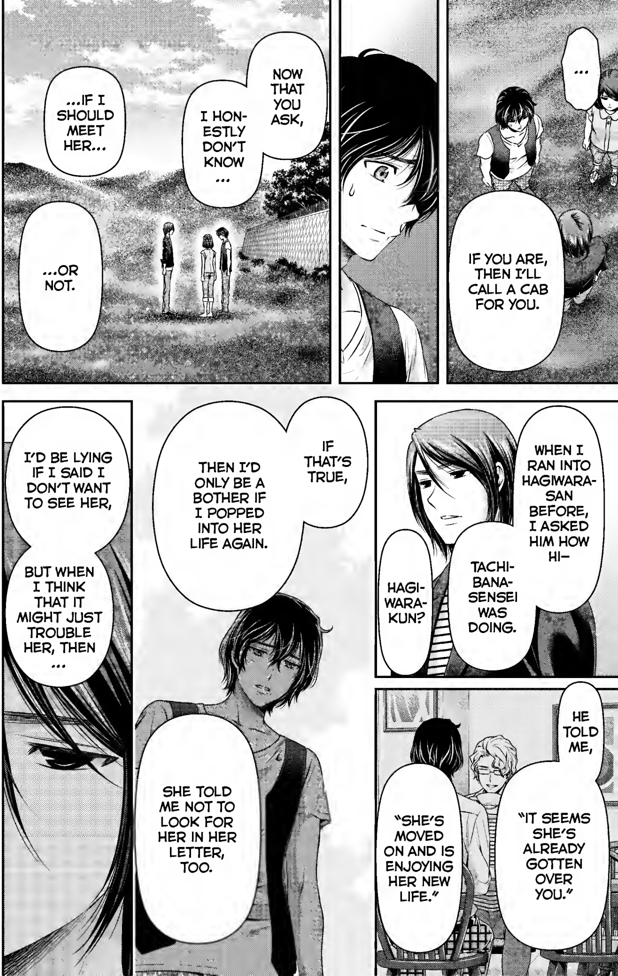

DASH
HINA!
WAIT UP! IT'S ME!
NATSUO!
HINA!

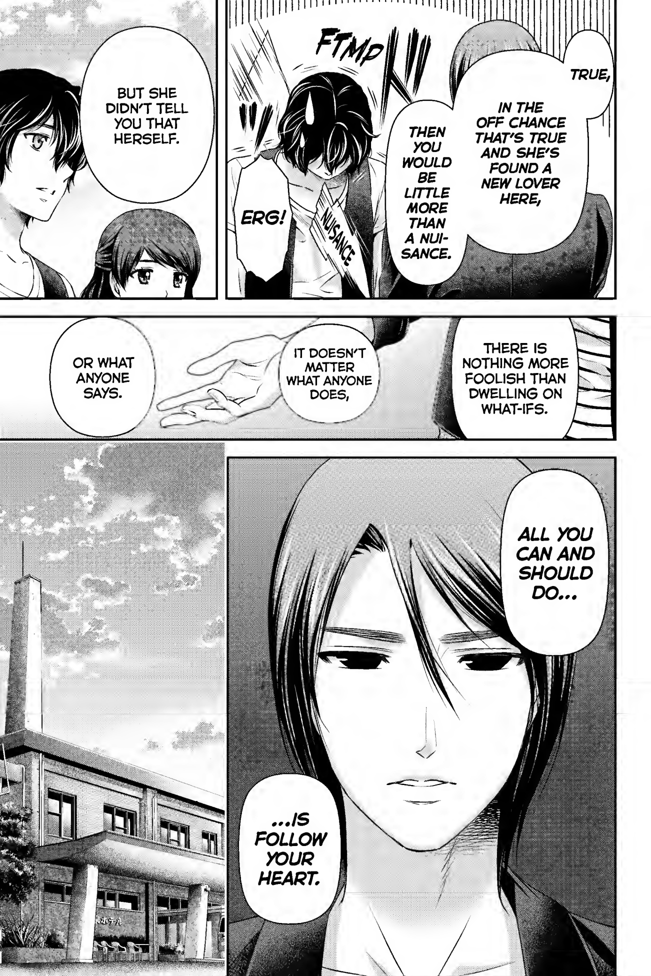

HM?
WHAT'S UP?
OH...I THOUGHT I SAW SOME-ONE CHASING AFTER US JUST NOW.
WHAT?! DON'T SCARE ME LIKE THAT!
SORRY, SORRY. IT'S PROBABLY NOTHING.
HA HA
...
RUI.
YANK
!

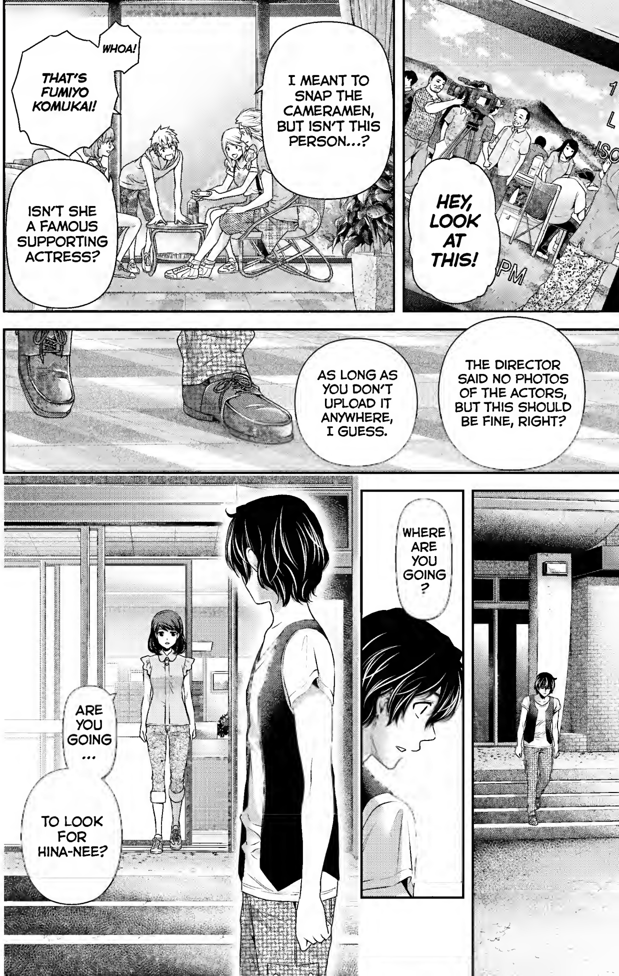

WE NEED TO TALK.
WH-
WHAT'S WRONG?
BA-DUM
WHAT HAP-PENED?
...
DON'T FREAK OUT, OKAY?
I JUST SAW HINA...
...IN A CAR THAT DROVE BY.
WHAT?
HER HAIR WAS SHORT, SO I THOUGHT IT MIGHT JUST BE SOMEONE WHO LOOKS LIKE HER,
BUT THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT.
THAT WAS DEFINITELY HINA.

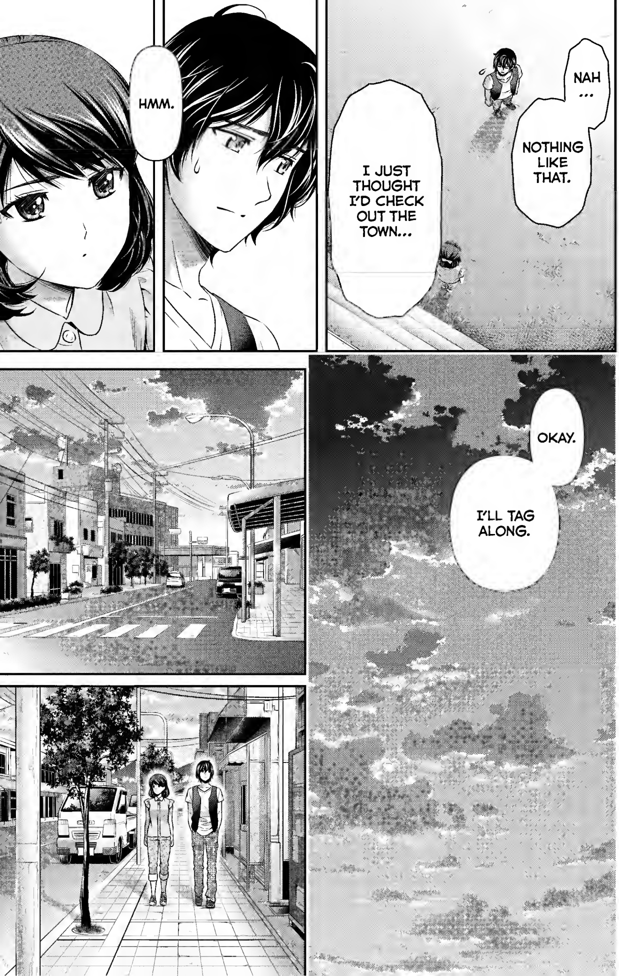

...
...DID YOU KNOW?
WHEN SENSEI TOLD US WHERE WE WERE GOING,
YOU LOOKED LIKE YOU HAD SOMETHING TO SAY.
IS *THIS* WHAT IT WAS?
こく…
NOD
WHY ...?
WHY'D YOU KEEP QUIET ABOUT THIS?!
WELL ?!
IF YOU KNEW, THEN YOU COULD'VE TOLD ME!
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
HAVING AN ARGUMENT?

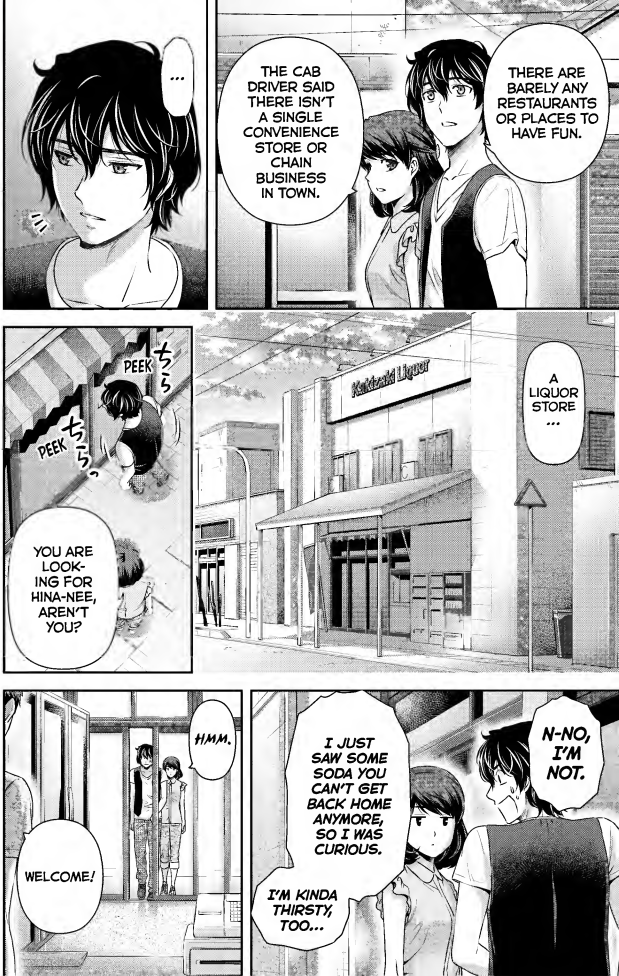

SENSEI...
YOU'LL WORRY THE OTHERS IF YOU DON'T KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN.
TACHIBANA-SENSEI?!
YES... I'M SURE OF IT.
I GUESS RUI KNEW SHE WAS TRANSFERRED TO A SCHOOL HERE.
I SEE...
...
AND?
WHAT WILL YOU DO?
HUH?
ARE YOU GOING...
...TO LOOK FOR HER?

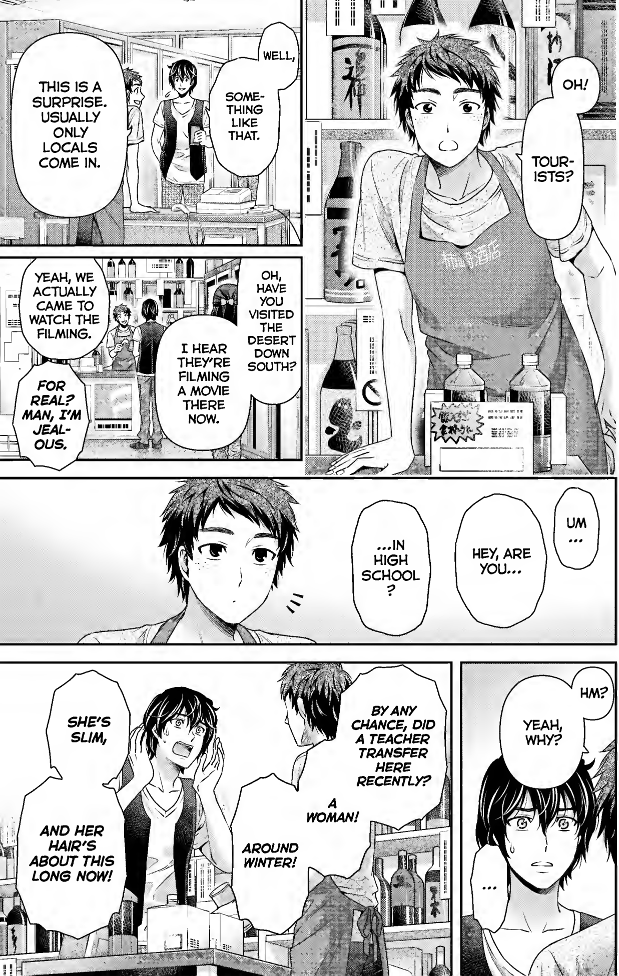

...
IF YOU ARE, THEN I'LL CALL A CAB FOR YOU.
NOW THAT YOU ASK,
I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW...
...IF I SHOULD MEET HER...
...OR NOT.
WHEN I RAN INTO HAGIWARA-SAN BEFORE, I ASKED HIM HOW HI—
TACHIBANA-SENSEI WAS DOING.
HAGIWARA-KUN?
HE TOLD ME,
"IT SEEMS SHE'S ALREADY GOTTEN OVER YOU."
"SHE'S MOVED ON AND IS ENJOYING HER NEW LIFE."
IF THAT'S TRUE,
THEN I'D ONLY BE A BOTHER IF I POPPED INTO HER LIFE AGAIN.
SHE TOLD ME NOT TO LOOK FOR HER IN HER LETTER, TOO.
I'D BE LYING IF I SAID I DON'T WANT TO SEE HER,
BUT WHEN I THINK THAT IT MIGHT JUST TROUBLE HER, THEN...

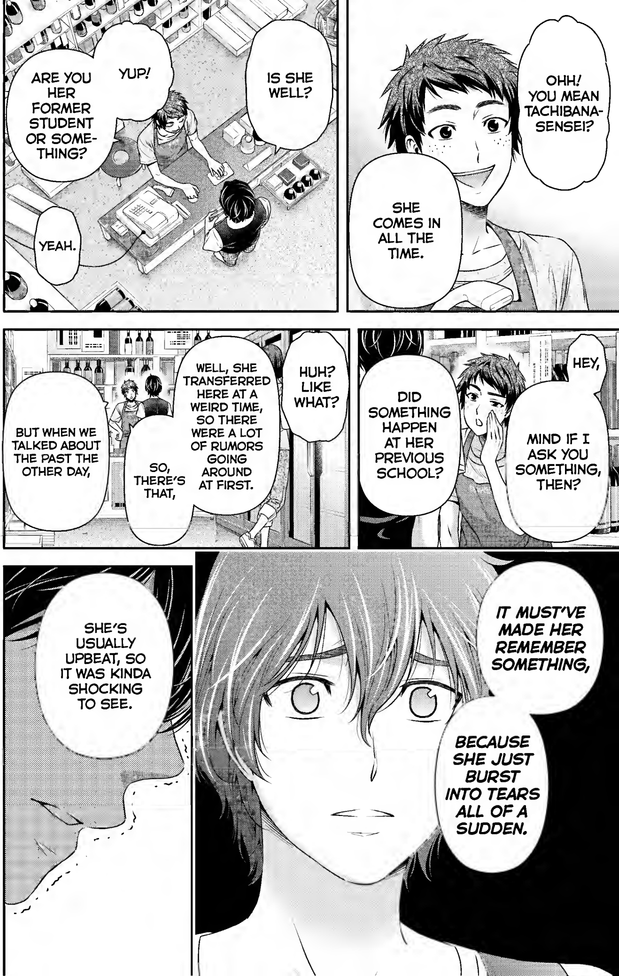

TRUE,
IN THE OFF CHANCE THAT'S TRUE AND SHE'S FOUND A NEW LOVER HERE,
THEN YOU WOULD BE LITTLE MORE THAN A NUISANCE.
FTMP
ERG!
NUISANCE
BUT SHE DIDN'T TELL YOU THAT HERSELF.
THERE IS NOTHING MORE FOOLISH THAN DWELLING ON WHAT-IFS.
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT ANYONE DOES,
OR WHAT ANYONE SAYS.
ALL YOU CAN AND SHOULD DO...
...IS FOLLOW YOUR HEART.
ホテル

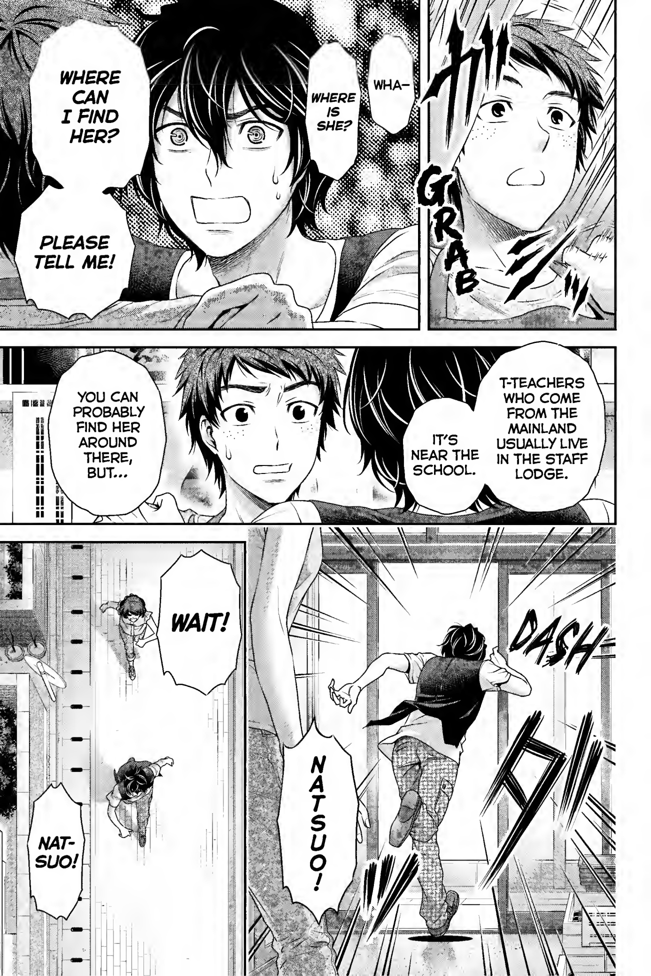

HEY, LOOK AT THIS!
I MEANT TO SNAP THE CAMERAMEN, BUT ISN'T THIS PERSON...?
WHOA!
THAT'S FUMIYO KOMUKAI!
ISN'T SHE A FAMOUS SUPPORTING ACTRESS?
THE DIRECTOR SAID NO PHOTOS OF THE ACTORS, BUT THIS SHOULD BE FINE, RIGHT?
AS LONG AS YOU DON'T UPLOAD IT ANYWHERE, I GUESS.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
ARE YOU GOING...
TO LOOK FOR HINA-NEE?

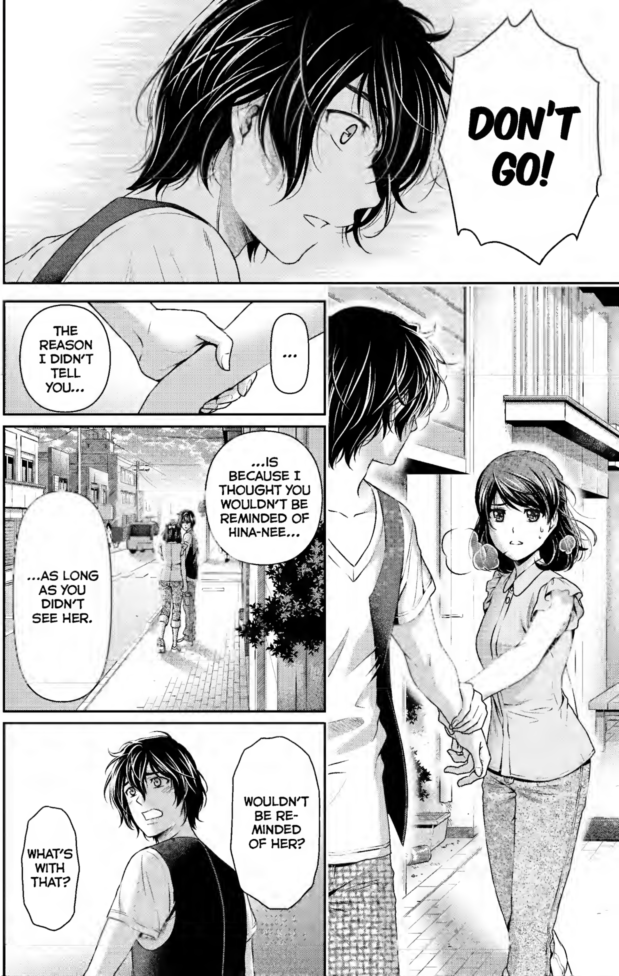

NAH...
NOTHING LIKE THAT.
I JUST THOUGHT I'D CHECK OUT THE TOWN...
HMM.
OKAY.
I'LL TAG ALONG.

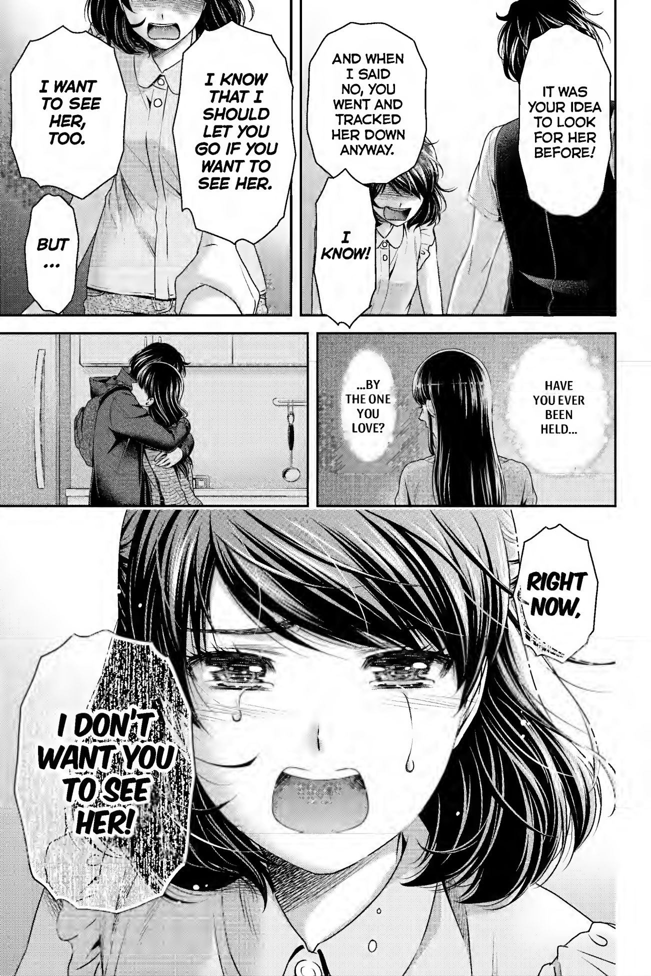

THERE ARE BARELY ANY RESTAURANTS OR PLACES TO HAVE FUN.
THE CAB DRIVER SAID THERE ISN'T A SINGLE CONVENIENCE STORE OR CHAIN BUSINESS IN TOWN.
...
A LIQUOR STORE ...
Kakizaki Liquor
PEEK ちら
PEEK ちらっ
YOU ARE LOOKING FOR HINA-NEE, AREN'T YOU?
N-NO, I'M NOT.
I JUST SAW SOME SODA YOU CAN'T GET BACK HOME ANYMORE, SO I WAS CURIOUS.
I'M KINDA THIRSTY, TOO...
HMM.
WELCOME!

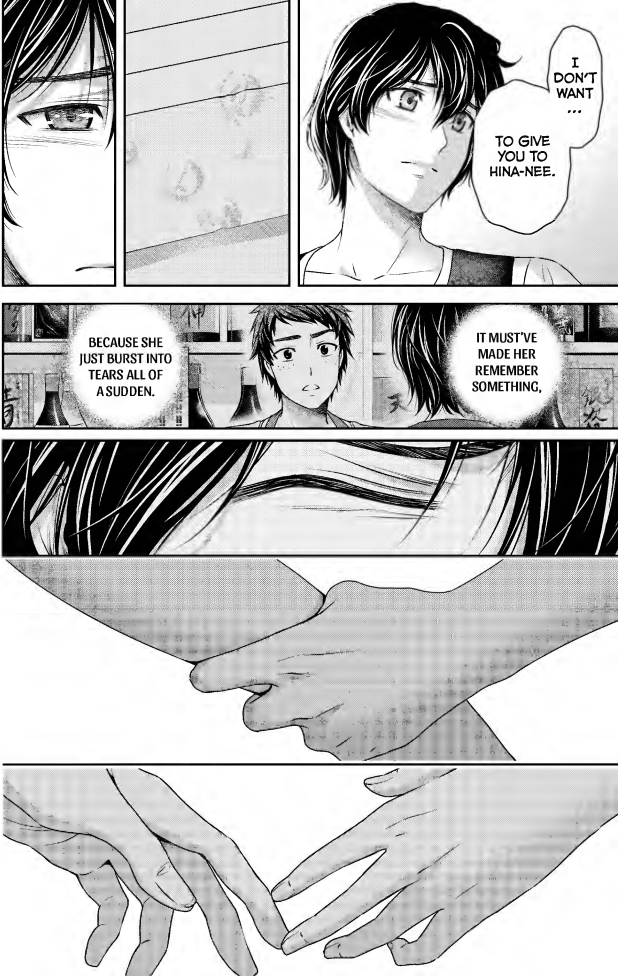

OH!
TOURISTS?
WELL, SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
THIS IS A SURPRISE. USUALLY ONLY LOCALS COME IN.
OH, HAVE YOU VISITED THE DESERT DOWN SOUTH?
I HEAR THEY'RE FILMING A MOVIE THERE NOW.
YEAH, WE ACTUALLY CAME TO WATCH THE FILMING.
FOR REAL? MAN, I'M JEALOUS.
UM...
HEY, ARE YOU...
...IN HIGH SCHOOL?
HM?
YEAH, WHY?
...
BY ANY CHANCE, DID A TEACHER TRANSFER HERE RECENTLY?
A WOMAN!
AROUND WINTER!
SHE'S SLIM,
AND HER HAIR'S ABOUT THIS LONG NOW!

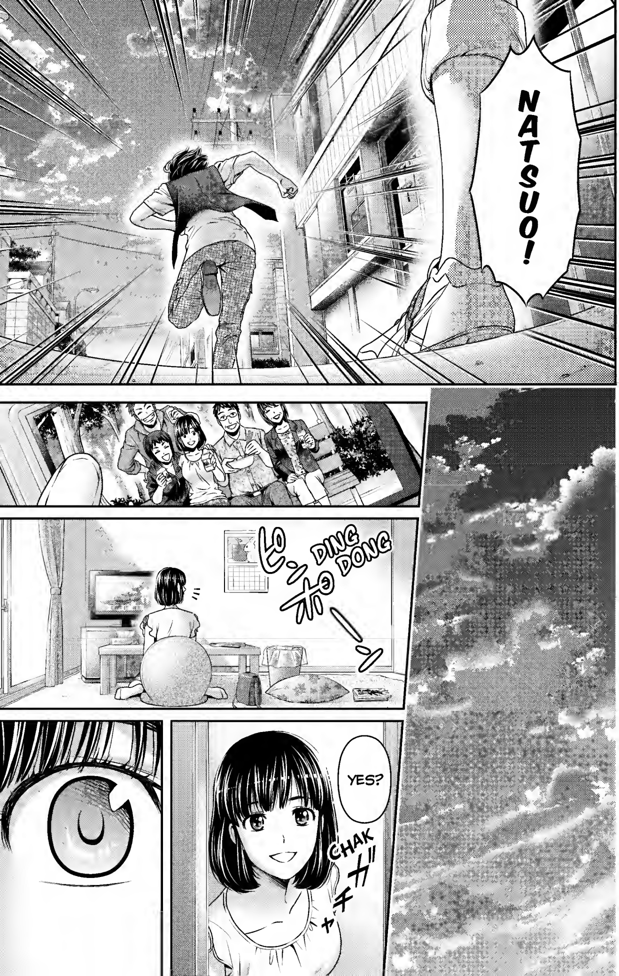

OHH! YOU MEAN TACHIBANA-SENSEI?
SHE COMES IN ALL THE TIME.
IS SHE WELL?
YUP!
ARE YOU HER FORMER STUDENT OR SOMETHING?
YEAH.
HEY,
MIND IF I ASK YOU SOMETHING, THEN?
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN AT HER PREVIOUS SCHOOL?
HUH? LIKE WHAT?
WELL, SHE TRANSFERRED HERE AT A WEIRD TIME, SO THERE WERE A LOT OF RUMORS GOING AROUND AT FIRST.
SO, THERE'S THAT,
BUT WHEN WE TALKED ABOUT THE PAST THE OTHER DAY,
IT MUST'VE MADE HER REMEMBER SOMETHING,
BECAUSE SHE JUST BURST INTO TEARS ALL OF A SUDDEN.
SHE'S USUALLY UPBEAT, SO IT WAS KINDA SHOCKING TO SEE.

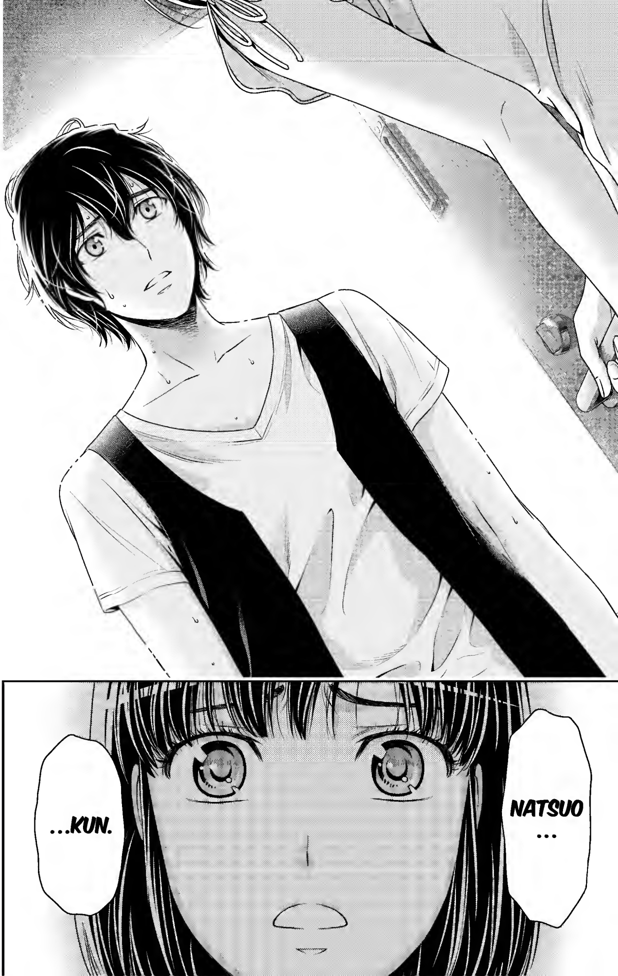

ガッ
GRAB
WHA–
WHERE IS SHE?
WHERE CAN I FIND HER?
PLEASE TELL ME!
T-TEACHERS WHO COME FROM THE MAINLAND USUALLY LIVE IN THE STAFF LODGE.
IT'S NEAR THE SCHOOL.
YOU CAN PROBABLY FIND HER AROUND THERE, BUT...
DASH
ダッ
NATSUO!
WAIT!
NAT-SUO!


DON'T GO!
...
THE REASON I DIDN'T TELL YOU...
...IS BECAUSE I THOUGHT YOU WOULDN'T BE REMINDED OF HINA-NEE...
...AS LONG AS YOU DIDN'T SEE HER.
WOULDN'T BE REMINDED OF HER?
WHAT'S WITH THAT?


IT WAS YOUR IDEA TO LOOK FOR HER BEFORE!
AND WHEN I SAID NO, YOU WENT AND TRACKED HER DOWN ANYWAY.
I KNOW!
I KNOW THAT I SHOULD LET YOU GO IF YOU WANT TO SEE HER.
I WANT TO SEE HER, TOO.
BUT ...
HAVE YOU EVER BEEN HELD...
...BY THE ONE YOU LOVE?
RIGHT NOW,
I DON'T WANT YOU TO SEE HER!


I DON'T WANT ...
TO GIVE YOU TO HINA-NEE.
IT MUST'VE MADE HER REMEMBER SOMETHING,
BECAUSE SHE JUST BURST INTO TEARS ALL OF A SUDDEN.


NATSUO!
ピーンポーン
DING DONG
YES?
ガチャ
CHAK


HA
NATSUO…
…KUN.

…to be continued.